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THOMAS CHALMERS.

A BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY.

BY

JAMES DODDS,

AUTHOR OF

'THE FIFTY YEARS' STRUGGLE OF THE SCOTTISH COVENANTERS'

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PREFACE.

VARIOUS motives, which need not be explained, led me some time ago to project a series of sketches, or *studies* (to adopt the convenient French term), of some of the leading men in the Nineteenth century —the men who have accomplished the facts or influenced the opinions of the age. The intention would be to excite an interest amongst the young especially, in the public men and the public events of what may be called *their own times*. The profusion of Memoirs which have lately been published of the men of the present century—too long and minute for general readers, but invaluable to the historian, the

essayist, or the critic—would afford the most ample materials for such an attempt at recent biography.

Certain circumstances of the moment have suggested to begin with the following sketch of THOMAS CHALMERS. The questions to which he devoted his life—the cure of pauperism, the reclamation of the city masses, the general amelioration of the working class, the effective organization of Churches if they are to be dissevered from connection with the State,—have of late assumed a position of new and critical importance; and it is well to give a renewed outline of the views and experiences of a man so benevolent, active, and fertile in plans, and also to indicate the sources where more complete information can be obtained.

I need not say how much the present Study is indebted to the narrative and documents in

the Memoirs by Dr. Hanna. That is one of the few works which, on its subject, must always be the *unus liber;* it can never be rivalled, and never superseded. And this, not only from the author's unequalled command of material, but also from the breadth and clearness of his mind, the accuracy of his judgment—loving his hero without making an idol of him, his insight into all the finer shades of character, his pleasant combination of gravity and humour, and the vigour and lucidity of his style.

J. D.

WESTMINSTER, 1870.

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I.

EARLY YEARS.

IF we suppose ourselves, in or about the year 1790, in the East-of-Fife town of Anstruther, commonly pronounced Anster,—ancient royal burgh and seaport, formerly the seat of a brisk trade with Holland and France and Spain, but by that time sinking in decay, — we may chance to come upon the school children engaged in their various amusements. If so, we shall soon distinguish one boy above the rest, seeming about ten or twelve years of age, who is the leader in their sports, — strong, active, merry, and boisterous, with big head, matted dark hair, large plain features, broad shoulders, well-proportioned but brawny limbs, his laugh always loudest, and his figure always foremost at foot-

ball and the other games in which they are contending. We notice, too, that he can make good use of his fists, not for the purposes of attack, but for the protection of the weaker schoolboys against the strong. We are told, upon inquiry, that this is TOM CHALMERS, —sturdy, brave, truthful, and generous,—the little hero of the school. He is son of John Chalmers, one of the most responsible men of the place, shipowner and general merchant, and sometime provost of the burgh, of a good old respectable family in the East of Fife. We have met him in our walks through the town, a man of stately and handsome appearance, and who bears the highest character for good sense and honourable dealing, urbanity, kindness, even jollity; withal, a man of fervent but unostentatious piety. A *George-the-Third* Tory, we may also remark; but, different from the fashionable Church-Moderatism usually conjoined with Toryism, he is a staunch Calvinist and a zealous Evangelical. The mother is Elizabeth Hall, daughter of a wine merchant in the neighbouring little seaport of Crail. She is truly the *masculine* parent, being a contrast

to the father in almost everything except their common veracity and integrity. She is short, thick, and rigidly erect in person; almost painfully sincere and downright, wanting the suavity of her husband; busy, exact, and authoritative in her household, but not harsh; intent upon duty, serious of mind, never relaxing; sitting for a whole evening without a smile or a change of countenance, amid the jocund laughter of her husband and the congenial friends whom he gathers around him. Self-restrained and undemonstrative, though she is a true partner to her husband in piety, as well as in domestic and business management, she exhibits outwardly none of his fervour of religious feeling.

So grows up Tom Chalmers, caring for nothing but play and boyish revelry and companionship. He learns easily and well when he likes; but he never likes, except to escape from the *coal-hole*,—the place of punishment at school,—where he is frequently put in durance. He reads little; but, like so many boys, he has taken that wonderful journey of the *Pilgrim's Progress;* and he has picked up and devoured greedily a queer book of its kind, attributed

to Bishop Berkeley, *The Adventures of Signior Guadentio di Lucca*, giving marvellous relations of his encounters with Algerine pirates, and his travels up the Nile and across the African deserts, and of the Mezoranian people in the interior, with their city of Phor, their patriarchal government and primitive innocence. But his chief delight has been in a *Pictorial Bible*, where he learned, first from the illustrations, and afterwards from reading, the scenes and incidents and lessons of Scripture. His uncle, Thomas Ballardie, too (who had married one of his father's sisters, and after whom he was named), skilful mathematician and practical navigator, has been trying, but in vain, to initiate him in his own favourite science of mathematics. Beginning at the beginning, the uncle took a slate and made the mark of a point upon it. 'What is that?' 'A dot,' answered the boy. 'Try again.' 'A tick,' was the final reply. The boy knew the dot over the letter *i* in his copy book, and the tick used in games upon the slate, but the mathematician's *point* was a thing totally unknown.

Under the impulse of his early readings, however, he took something of an unconscious literary turn, different from his brothers, who had all taken to commerce or the sea. When a child, he formed the resolution of being a minister. This resolution sprang from none of the stirrings of early piety, of which we sometimes hear; he showed none of the religious impressions which might have been expected of one brought up in such an exemplary home. It was merely because at that time the *minister* was the greatest and cleverest of men in the eyes of a country boy; and if such a boy had any intellectual ambition in him, he generally aspired to distinguish himself in the pulpit.

II.

FORMATION OF THE FUTURE MAN.

NEXT time we meet with Chalmers is at the University of St. Andrews, where he entered as a student in session 1791–2, when he was in the twelfth year of his age.

At this stage it will save interruptions and repetitions hereafter, and make many of our observations more intelligible, if we run over at once the chronology of his life from the time of his entering college up to (say) his twenty-fifth year.

In session 1791–2, he entered the University of St. Andrews. In 1793–4, and 1794–5, he began the study of mathematics, and proceeded to that of natural philosophy. In 1795–6, he passed to the curriculum of theology. After

session 1797–8 he engaged himself as tutor in a family, but left them about the end of 1798, and took a short concluding session in 1799. He was licensed as a preacher, by the Presbytery of St. Andrews, in July 1799. Not immediately obtaining employment, he spent session 1799–1800 in Edinburgh, where he renewed the study of mathematics under Playfair, and of natural philosophy under Robison; and again, in session 1800–1, studying chemistry under Hope, and moral philosophy and political economy under Dugald Stewart. The whole bent of his ambition at this time was not to be a working clergyman, but to be a professor at one of the universities, either of mathematics or of natural philosophy. In the summer of 1801 he went as assistant minister to Cavers, a parish on the Borders, near Hawick. In November 1802 he was appointed, much to his delight, assistant professor of mathematics in the University of St. Andrews, under Professor Vilant, who had retired in consequence of ill health. About the same time he was nominated minister of the parish of Kilmany, in Fife, which was in the gift of the University;

but he was not ordained until the 12th of May 1803. From a misunderstanding with Vilant, he was dismissed from his assistant professorship at the close of the session in 1803; but, to vindicate himself from this stigma, he opened an independent class of mathematics in St. Andrews in session 1803–4, and also delivered a course of lectures on chemistry, all in the face of marked opposition by the University authorities, and by his presbytery. He had at the same time to do ministerial duty at Kilmany. In session 1804-5, he repeated the chemical lectures at St. Andrews, but dropt the class of mathematics. In 1805, the mathematical chair of Edinburgh becoming vacant, he offered himself as a candidate, but was unsuccessful.

From this time (about the end of 1805), failing to secure the coveted prize of a professorship, he sank down in the meantime into what he would deem the mediocrity — of parish minister of Kilmany.

Reverting now to his university course: his two first sessions were wasted in much the same way as were his school days at Anster. He came to college too illiterate to have any pre-

paration or taste for the higher classics, even though expounded by John Hunter, one of the most admired scholars and grammarians of his day. 'He was at that time,' is the description by one of his college companions,—'He was at that time very young and volatile, and boyish and idle in his habits. . . . During the first two sessions a great part of his time must have been occupied . . . in boyish amusements, such as golf, foot-ball, and particularly hand-ball, in which latter he was remarkably expert, owing to his being left-handed.' But he continued, as at school, to be the favourite of his companions for fun, frolic, and gallantry. 'His character during all my acquaintance with him,' continues the same witness, 'was that of the strictest integrity and warmest affection.'

It was in his fourteenth year—it was when he came in contact with the science of mathematics—that his intellect first awoke and gave indication of its giant energies. A *point* now became something other to him than it was in his childhood, when he told Uncle Ballardie that it was a dot or a tick.

But we shall better understand his ardour in

mathematics, and see to the root of his future mental development, if we mark generally what were the predispositions of his nature, from which the intellectual seeds must derive their nourishment and fecundity. So much, in the forming of a man, always depends upon his constitutional peculiarities and his ruling dispositions,—what we call the *temperament* of the man,—his idiosyncrasy, his special individualism.

He was possessed, as we have seen, of a strong, active animal nature. Then he was of a most impetuous disposition; most undisguised and unrestrained in all his feelings; determined in resolution and will and execution; vehement in all his moods and actions; vehement in his affections, and, though incapable of malice or revenge, vehement when roused up to a feeling of indignation, or a spirit of resistance. This sort of vehemence he exhibited in those early times, half ludicrously, half fearfully, in his conflicts with the family where he was tutor, and with the professors of St. Andrews, and with his presbytery, all as particularly set forth in the pages of his biographer, Dr. Hanna. Everything was *real* with him; everything took a

palpable form to his mind, impressed him keenly, and touched him to the quick.

Such a temperament as this—of strong animalism combined with vehement susceptibility, surcharged with electricity, both physical and mental—must always have tended to explosion, to excess of activity. The word that we shall use for it is *intensity*—constitutional intensity. Here, more than in anything else, lay the secret of his life, of his eloquence, of his religious and philanthropic achievements, of his sway over men, of his power, and occasionally of his weakness. He used to feel and sometimes complain of this intensity, calling it 'the redundant energy of his temperament.' At an early period he writes to his father:—'My hands are full of business. I am living just now the life I seem to be formed for—a life of constant and unremitting activity. Deprive me of employment, and you condemn me to a life of misery and disgust.' This intensity, when at times it got the better of him, would amount to a mania. He has often depicted it very graphically in his Journals, though in too severe a tone of self-depreciation; in one place, as an 'industrious-

ness from a mere principle of animal activity;' in another, as 'the entire devotion of my mind to any novelty which interests it, so as to suspend all regular occupation in the pursuit of it.' Hence it was that all dry and all commonplace people kept up the cry through his whole life —'that Chalmers was *mad!*'

The classics had called forth no response from his mind. The classics, as taught in schools and colleges, are, in the form of them, the study of the ancient languages, their meaning, structure, and the arrangement of their sentences,—that is *criticism;* and as regards the subjects of them, consist chiefly of the highest models of poetry, or of history,—that is *literature;* being the exercise of pure imagination, as in poetry, or of probable reasoning, as in the narratives and judgments of history. Chalmers had little of the critical and mere literary faculty—what makes a Hazlitt or a Jeffrey; little of the pure imagination—what makes a Coleridge, or Shelley, or Tennyson; he had no satisfaction in probable reasoning; he always strove to raise it up to the region of a demonstrative certainty. To such a mind the fancies and felicities of mere

classicalism could have little charm. But when mathematics came before him, with its defined magnitudes and their necessary properties, he found a something which exactly filled the cravings of his mind ; not imaginations, not probabilities, but the real constituents of the universe, the palpable existences of nature, their properties and relations evolved each from each, with an absolute, an all-satisfying certainty.

Having now found in mathematics the true counterpart of his mind, he plunged into the study of it with the intensity of his temperament, almost with the fixed idea of a mania. He was absorbed, transported into the regions of abstraction ; was often insensible to all around ; 'giving his whole mind to it,' we are informed by the same companion from whom we have been quoting, 'and often pursuing some favourite, or even as we thought some foolish idea, whilst we were talking around him, and perhaps laughing at his abstraction, or breaking in upon his cogitations, and pronouncing him the next thing to mad.'

This strongly pronounced mathematical turn of mind was not a temporary crotchet, but abode

with him as the mould of his whole intellect. Mathematics was his engrossing study up to at least his thirtieth year; and till the great overspreading change took place in his character, it was the dream of his ambition to be a mathematical professor. His mathematical oneideadness was afterwards qualified by an almost equal love for natural philosophy. Here he had to reach his data, not by abstract definitions and postulates as in mathematics—by deduction; but by skilfully conducted experiments—by induction. He thus became eventually, as it were, a *mathematico-physicist*. This mingled passion for mathematics and physics determined his modes of reasoning, whatever the department of thought in which he might ultimately be engaged. That is, he would always show a dislike for a mere bundle of probabilities. Even in departments where the conclusion could only be a balance of probabilities,—as in ethics, for example, or political economy,—he would always endeavour to reduce and force his reasoning into a mathematico-physical shape; that is, from certain data collected by induction, as in physics, he

would follow his conclusion down to its ultimate consequences by a process of rigid deduction, as in mathematics. This was always the type of his reasoning; he was not a roving disquisitionist, his effort was always to be—a necessary demonstrator. So thoroughly did he feel this, that he used to say in after years, to a fellow-presbyter with whom he often laboured in cases before the Church courts, 'Give me the one main point of the case, and I'll work it out; I cannot scatter myself over a multitude of points.' He always seemed, as preacher, theologian, philanthropist, to be dealing with clear-drawn figures, with real tangible elements, with things that he could lay his hands upon—*so!*

Look then at this substratum of his mind. It was a rare formation; very extraordinary, yet very simple; the elements few in number, but in a state of unusual energy, and elements that are rarely found together. The result must be a mind and life simple, direct, strong in impetus, wonderfully powerful. He has the hard matter-of-factness and strict deduction of the mathematician and natural philosopher, with the fiery ring all around them

of an intensity which might make the lyrical poet or the man of extreme action. His mathematico-physicism fixes him into absolute, immoveable convictions; his constitutional intensity heats up these convictions into living powers. What a magazine of force must there be in such a man, if it can only be drawn forth, and find proper channels of communication! What vitality of belief, what concentration of will, what definiteness of aim, what a rush and whirl of emotion, what a leap over obstacles at which colder temperaments would stand aghast!

His own estimate of himself was, that if Nature had fitted him for one thing more than another, it was to be a military engineer. Apparently a correct estimate. But in the exercise of the selfsame qualities he became the MORAL ENGINEER of Scotland—the constructor of works for the benefit and elevation of man, which are acknowledged as models through the whole bounds of Christendom.

III.

STRUGGLES OF THE SOUL.

THIS awakening of an intellect so long inert, but so vivid when once kindled, could not be confined to the mere ardent pursuit of mathematics and physics; it sought vent for itself in the outlets of literary composition. It was then he commenced writing essays and exercises, which he soon did with facility, and in a pointed and emphatic style, containing the germ of his future peculiar mannerism.

But — most momentous of all — this intense agitation reached down to the very foundation of his beliefs—his young instinctive impressions, in politics, in morals, in religion,—in fact, to the essential conditions of his being.

The eighteenth century, as we all know, was

a violent reaction against the previous ages of easy and passive belief; it was a time of merciless denudation, of merciless destruction; every opinion deemed heretofore sacred, was stripped bare and held up to derision, and then trampled to death. Hume, with his subtleties, had reduced all causes in nature, even the personality of man, to mere associations of the mind. The universe was a shuffling of cards; there was no certainty of a God, of immortality, of moral responsibility. Voltaire made a mere mockery of the Christian religion, as a silly and worn-out superstition, not deserving to be argued with, but only to be hooted out of the world with contempt. Then came the 'last word' of the French Encyclopedists, beyond which it was impossible for the grossest profanity to go: that all that exists is only so much dirt in motion; and that the destiny and happiness of man consists in following the propensities of that dirt of which he is composed. These various forms of scepticism, materialism, and brutism prevailed largely, though somewhat secretly, amongst the literati and upper class of Scotland, and had infected

even the professors of the universities and the ministers of the Church. It was evidently by the hands of his own academic superiors that Chalmers, when a lad of seventeen, was first drenched in this pollution.

A favourite pupil of his mathematical professor, Dr. James Brown, he was early admitted to his esoteric parties, with Leslie, afterwards Sir John, and James Mylne, afterwards Professor of Moral Philosophy in Glasgow,—all 'marked men,' says the same fellow-student from whom we have already quoted, 'ultra Whigs, keen reformers, and what would now be called Radicals.' From these conversations, but especially from reading the *Political Justice* of Godwin, who, for a while, was the oracle of his opinions, he kicked away his hereditary Toryism, writhed under the oppressions of existing society, and longed for that era of social equality and human perfectibility which Godwin dangled before his youthful fancy. But chiefly he bowed before the idol of philosophical necessity, so far familiar to him as bearing some resemblance to his father's *predestination;* but Calvin's rod turned into Godwin's serpent. Predestination was har-

dened into Fatalism; and the tempter whispered:

'All things are eternally fixed,—the place and qualities of every atom, the movement of every body and every system, the links of circumstances that form the chain of events. Is there any standing-room left for a God? Certainly there is none for a providence.'

The youth now paid the penalty of every one who tries the lock of these inscrutable questions; he was thrown prostrate on the ground, and struck with blindness. 'What! no room, no room in this universe for God?'

A grave, solemn, but devout-minded teacher passed by, named Jonathan Edwards, who raised the fallen youth, and breathed words of comfort into his ear.

'My son, all is fixed from eternity, that is true; but *how* fixed? It cannot be by unintelligent chance, which is mere unsettlement, and can fix nothing. Intelligence alone can fix motions and events; Supreme Intelligence alone can fix universal order. "He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and

none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?"'

Now then, universally through all things—the spheres of space, the phenomena of earth, the hearts of men, the revolutions of society—he beheld the almighty Hand, guiding and attuning all and each—each in its specific function, all in its majestic harmony—until the whole temple of Nature resounded with one unbroken song of rejoicing and praise. He could not restrain his emotions; they unfitted him for the meaner converse of society; his intensity shook him from his slumbers in the early mornings, and impelled him into the companionless solitudes of the country, there to indulge alone, in the eye of his Maker, under the canopy of heaven, in visions unutterable, incommunicable. 'I spent nearly a twelvemonth,' he thus describes his exaltations,—'I spent nearly a twelvemonth in a sort of mental Elysium; and the one idea which ministered to my soul all its rapture, was the magnificence of the Godhead, and the universal subordination of all things to the one great purpose for which He evolved and was supporting creation.'

Child of the dust, crushed before the moth! thou shalt pay dearly for these exaltations. There will come the sickness and low fever of reaction. For thy twelvemonth of 'mental Elysium,' thou shalt have many years of mental agony and torture. A darker tempter than Godwin now came to his side, in the shape of the French *System of Nature*.—

'Young man, lover of truth, contemner of hollow sounds and superstition! clear thyself of those last distempered dreams in which thou art so fondly indulging,—an invisible, incomprehensible God, creating and filling and directing all things. Fear and suffering and ignorance have raised up the phantom of a God, and then trembled before it. Truth and peace are alone to be found in the blank negation of atheism,—in a world made bare of any superior being to think of, to worship, or to fear. What seest thou, keen-eyed young mathematician and physicist,—what seest thou everywhere but only matter and motion? These account for all things, without flying abroad into abstractions. As for man, boastful man! he is no more than the clod of the valley

or the ape of the desert; he is only matter arrived at a higher stage of motion. His thought and will are secretions of his brain; his beliefs are delusions; he is but a blind tool in the hand of inevitable necessity. What more remains of him, when the chemistry of life leaves him lying there, a helpless and loathsome ruin? Thy only immortality is fame: be a great mathematician, a great something, to live for generations in the breath of posterity. Above all, live for thyself; thou hast nothing else to regard, nothing else to attend to. Conscience is a ghost seen by the coward in the dark. Duty is the lowest of slavery. Young man! live for thyself, for appetite, for pleasure; fear nothing, hope nothing, believe nothing, and thou shalt be a perfect man!'

Alas! alas! and has all his thirst for knowledge, all his eager pursuit of truth, brought him only to this goal at last—the utter blank of *Nothingness?* His anguish was fearful; it threatened to dethrone his reason. The same fellow-student, from whom we have learned so much of his youthful story, lifts up a corner of the veil from his present mental sufferings:

'He came to me at St. Andrews in a state of great excitement and unhappiness, and lived with me during the rest of the session. . . . Those who were not particularly acquainted with him thought him going fast into a state of derangement. One very common expression in his public prayers, and which showed the state of his mind at that time,—"Oh, give us some steady object for our mind to rest upon!"—was uttered with all his characteristic earnestness and emphasis. I knew that he was exceedingly earnest in seeking the light of truth at that time in his private devotion; and was often on his knees at my bedside after I had gone to bed.'

It was many years before he found his way out of this labyrinth. He was too truthful and sincere to satisfy himself with commonplaces, or to still the gnawings of his heart with opiates. He waited and waited, and turned in every direction. Then, from the lectures of Professor Robison, when he was in his twenty-first year, the true light dawned upon his mind, and showed him a pathway from the miry pit of Atheism.

'Our minds,'—so did the HEALING VOICE address him,—'our minds are so constituted from our earliest years, that we certainly expect and undoubtingly believe a uniform recurrence of events to follow from the same combination of circumstances; and the events of nature do uniformly follow in accordance with the human expectation and belief. We see this belief implanted in the mind of the infant antecedently to all experience; and the gathering experience of years, far from showing it to be fallacious, adds daily and hourly proof of its reality. How soon does the infant expect with certainty that a sound will proceed from the shaking of its rattle! How proverbially soon does it dread the fire from its certain expectation of being burned! The boy expects with all the certainty of fact the time when he will gather nuts, and the time also when he will slide upon the ice. The farmer, when his hand scatters the grain in early spring, is equally certain that the same hand will reap the crop in autumn; his expectation is as certain to his mind as his actual sensation; he is as sure of the future as of the present fact. The sailor expects the very hour

and minute when his bark will be floated by the advancing tide; nay, he can reckon with certainty upon the prevailing winds and currents of the ocean, so long as the same conditions of nature remain unaltered. The astronomer is not more certain that he actually sees the pole-star on any given night, than that, if alive, he shall see the comet which, in the order of nature, must appear five years hence. In short, man from his earliest years expects nature to be constant; and nature is constant according to his expectations. In other words, the constitution of the mind and the constitution of nature are adapted to each other by a pre-established harmony. Can dull, unplanning matter, can mere whirling, unplanning motion, produce this? Can ever-variable chance produce ever-invariable certainty? It is an abuse of words, a mere impudent defiance of common reason. When such contradictions in terms are uttered as philosophy, we can only fall back upon our inward-speaking reason, and shut our ears against the presumptuous babblers. The promise in the mind is fulfilled in nature. The promise and the fulfilment exactly agreeing, are

indubitable marks of a designing Intelligence, and must emanate from one and the same source. The Promiser and the Fulfiller then are intelligent, are one, and must be omnipotent; that is to say, the Promiser and Fulfiller is God. He hath also in thy mind promised thee the inheritance of a blessed immortality; but has commanded thee not to live to thyself, but in obedience to His own monitor in thy breast—conscience." Therefore, young man, be sure that this certain expectation shall meet with its real event: the promise of immortality shall be followed by a glorious fulfilment!'

IV.

FIRST YEARS IN KILMANY.

BUT it was then, as it was ever afterwards: if we looked only at the ferment of his mind, he would appear thoroughly over-wrought in brain and strength, likely enough to come soon to the grave or a madhouse; yet if we looked at him next in his gambols and rambles and pleasantries, we were relieved of all apprehension, by finding him the most healthy, sociable, and light-hearted of men. This peculiarity must always be kept in view, otherwise the most erroneous impressions will be formed of his character, and of the aspect which he bore to the world lying around him. This STUDY of ours must be short, and can seize him only in his most energetic attitudes; but the reader must always

carry along with him the understanding, that Chalmers, all through his life, to the very end, busy as he was, and troubled and depressed as he often felt, had time for everything—had his perennial seasons of relaxation, of travel, of wide social intercourse, of the most full-souled enjoyment.

In the midst of the mental agitations which we have been describing, he paid a visit to his eldest brother James, in Liverpool; and in his Diary of the journey we find neither sentimentality nor rhapsody, not a trace of his late agonies, but minute records of the shiftings of the wind in the Forth, of the locks in the Glasgow Canal, the number of steps up to Dumbarton Castle, the population and dock-dues of Liverpool, the ploughed and pasture land of Cheshire, and so forth.

He paid a second visit in the summer of 1799, when newly licensed, and he preached his first sermon in Wigan. James—not unlike his namesake in *As you Like It*—dry, sententious, and mocking, yet significant in his mockery—gives us the first etching of Thomas Chalmers as a *pulpit orator*.

'His mode of delivery is expressive, his language beautiful, and his arguments very forcible and strong. His sermon contained a due mixture both of the doctrinal and practical parts of religion, but I think it inclined rather more to the latter. . . . It is the opinion of those who pretend to be judges that he will shine in the pulpit; but as yet he is rather awkward in his appearance. We, however, are at some pains in adjusting his dress, manner, etc.; but he does not seem to pay any great regard to it himself. His mathematical studies seem to occupy more of his time than the religious.'

James then encloses some letters to the family by Thomas himself,—'*if you can read them*,' adds the humorist, the said Thomas's writing being as illegible as his dress was unfashionable. In neither did he improve as years rolled on. In writing he became worse, till his good father used to lay aside his letters in a desk, saying, 'Tom will read them to us himself when he next comes to Anster.'

In 1805, when in his twenty-fifth year, Chalmers gave up for a time his dream of

professorial eminence; he would rather seek the laurels of popular authorship. These were in the gift of a free and discerning public, and could not be kept back by the intrigues of any small or envious coterie. He would, in the meantime, sit down in his manse of Kilmany; and as, in his opinion recorded in a pamphlet which he published about this time, 'there is almost no consumption of intellectual effort in the peculiar employment of a minister,' he would be ready to throw himself into any subject or engagement which passing events might bring round.

Kilmany, being interpreted by Gaelic scholars, is said to mean—*the church of the valley.*

The fine bold range of the Ochils terminates to the east on the confines of Fife; when there begins a lower series of undulating ridges, generally running parallel, intermingled with detached hills, and trending towards the east coast. These parallel ridges enclose their several valleys. The central and principal is that of the river Eden, which finally discharges itself into St. Andrew's Bay. To the north is the vale of Kilmany, which is the northernmost

of these Fife valleys; for next, over the heights, is the great estuary of the Tay rolling past Dundee.

It is a short and narrow vale, hemmed in by those parallel ridges of which we have spoken. It is about six miles in length, and never more than three in width, often much narrower. A number of gathering rills draw together in it, and form into a stream which is called the Moutray. This stream is small and noways conspicuous; it is oftener out of sight than in, and constitutes no feature of the landscape to the ordinary traveller. At the entrance to the vale, Norman Law rears its lordly head — a far-seen beacon in the vale itself, and all over Forfarshire and Fife, and away even to Edinburgh. The enclosing heights are frequently steep, but not rough or bare; they are either cultivated or are soft pasture up to the top. The fields at the bottom are in a state of perfect cultivation, interspersed with pleasant hedgerows; and the country, both hill and plain, is adorned with woods, and no less with comfortable farmhouses and cottages, and snug mansions on the slopes of the hills.

It is, in one word, a fertile and smiling agricultural district.

Near the middle, lying low on the banks of the stream, is the hamlet of Kilmany, with some eighty people, with its humble but decent cottages, saw-mill, smith's forge, carpenter's shop, and other signs of rustic activity. It is embosomed in a grove of very fine old trees—ash, elm, and plane. The manse, which dates from 1810, is meanly situated, built of a cold dark-grey stone of the district, without any style or ornament, and has nothing externally of that cosiness and amenity which commonly distinguish the country manse. Its only redeeming point is a good lookout to the southern hills; and I believe one of the western windows commands a peep of the lordly Norman Law. The church—the church of the valley—has a better situation, at the head of the village, on a raised green mound—one would suppose it artificial—above a bend of the Moutray. It is fenced round by stately rows of ash and plane trees, and has a full view of the hills behind and before, and down the vale as it stretches to the Leuchars plain below, on the margin of the ocean.

Though a cultivated and busy district, with an intelligent population, and nothing primitive or far-back about it, yet it has all the charm of the most perfect seclusion. Its hilly ridges seem to close it in from all outer communication; there is nowhere any opening, or peep into any world beyond; it sees only its own hill-tops, hears only the fall of its own waters, the song of its own birds. It is far from any considerable town, and the journey difficult. It is far from any leading highway. It has no remarkable beauty, no striking picturesqueness; yet its characteristics are eminently pleasing—fertility, verdure, richness of garniture; all the fruits of abundance; all the peace of seclusion, with all the signs of civilisation.

In this Kilmany, Thomas Chalmers set up his household, in an old dilapidated manse,—this was before the present one was erected. His sister Jane was installed as housekeeper; and the whole tribe of younger brothers and sisters were always hiving up from the dry, sandy, rocky coast of Anster, to the soft pleasant banks of the Moutray.

Chalmers was still the same gallant, truthful, lovable being; but he had a good deal of the reckless, and violent, and foolish; was eccentric in his habits, and fond of frolic. He figured at this time very prominently as a captain of Volunteers in Fife, filled the pulpit with philippics against Bonaparte, and was prouder of his military uniform than of his clerical gown.

One day, as he was preaching—it is to be hoped a week-day—happening to raise his arm in a sweep of eloquence, the scarlet coat glanced out from under the folds of his canonical robes. Another day, when a complimentary dinner was to be given at St. Andrews to the officers of the corps, he appeared on the streets in full flash of scarlet coat and white breeches. Meeting a neighbour clergyman, who was a stickler for the proprieties, Chalmers advanced and saluted him with a proud consciousness of his very superior accoutrements.

'How d'ye do?'

'Very well, thank you,' was the answer; 'but you have the advantage over me, I do not know who addresses me.'

'Don't know me? Hypocrisy! you know me perfectly—Chalmers of Kilmany.'

'Forgive me, sir,' replied the inexorable tormentor, 'you must be joking. You do certainly bear a resemblance to Mr. Chalmers; but I am sure my friend has too much good sense to appear in a dress so unbecoming his profession.'

Chalmers was sadly mortified, but took the hint; and so far reduced the splendour of his habiliments, that, going to a friend in St. Andrews, he borrowed a black coat, which he substituted for his scarlet one.

It may be noted in passing, that he made his first journey to London in 1807, and saw all the 'lions;' but what was most memorable, from some very imperfect experiments which he saw at a lecture there, aided by his own chemical knowledge, he was amongst the first who had a distinct forecast of the introduction of *gas* as the means of lighting our streets and houses.

He often entertained his parishioners, as well as the inhabitants of the neighbouring dales, with lectures on chemistry and other branches of science.

He also applied his chemical skill to the

improvement of Scotch drink,—to producing a very mild and agreeable *whisky;* although, it must be remembered, he was always most moderate in his own libations. He was in the habit of going over on Saturday nights to a neighbouring minister's, then a bachelor like himself, and arranging to exchange pulpits on the Sunday. He was always flush with some new topic, or new discovery. On one occasion it was, 'Do you know, man, I have discovered a simple method to produce the mildest and most delicious whisky?'

'Indeed! how do you manage that?'

'Purely by the action of the atmosphere. It's quite a mistake to cork your bottles and exclude the air. No, sir, take out the cork and throw open the cupboard-door, and the air acting upon the spirit, gives it, sir, a most delightful mildness.'

On the Sunday morning, as his neighbour mounted for Kilmany, he said with unbounded glee:

'I don't know what you'll get to eat, but I know what you'll get to drink. The whisky, sir, is unrivalled—very mild, you know, very mild.'

In the evening, as his friend returned, Chalmers came out and hailed him with his usual hearty salutations. Remembering his boast:

'Well, sir, anything to eat?'

'Oh, as much as I wanted.'

And with a significant leer, 'Anything to drink?'

'Oh yes! I got plenty to drink.'

'Ah, capital! well—'

'Well, when I arrived in the morning, as I was hot with riding, I took a glass of your whisky, and as I found it very mild, I took two before going up to preach.'

'Well, sir?'

'After the service I took some dinner, and sat and finished the bottle.'

'Finished the bottle!' gasped Chalmers in astonishment. 'Come, nonsense! if you had finished the bottle, you would not have been here to tell the tale.'

'Oh yes, I finished the bottle. The fact is, Mr. Chalmers, you're a bachelor as well as myself, and if you take the cork out of your whisky bottle, and throw open your cupboard-

door, it will soon be a very mild whisky—yours was mostly *water*.'

Chalmers looked a little crestfallen; but at last, with strong faith in the chemical action of air, and large charity for all men and womenkind, he gulped down the insinuation against his maid-servant, and persisted:

'No, sir, no! you were deceived by its extreme mildness; purely the action of the atmosphere!'

He addicted himself also, by a strong mental propension, to the rising discussions of Political Economy, and burned with ambition to come out as a distinguished author. In 1808 appeared his first regular work,—it was on the *National Resources*,—mainly to prove that Bonaparte's decrees and blockades against our foreign trade could not destroy, nor even seriously cripple, our internal wealth and industry and means of defence. One thing was striking from the first, that he bent the whole energies of his thought, not so much on the abstruser theories of political economy, as on those practical and vital problems which tend to meet the difficulties, and ameliorate the condition of the

working classes. He was the first political economist who seized, with a foresight and philanthropy equally before his time, upon the *condition-of-the-people question*, as the paramount, the coming question of the age.

He was sufficiently regular in his ministerial duties, for he was an honourable man, and would perform what he had undertaken; and being sociable, moreover, and homely and humorous, compassionate and kind-hearted, he loved to rove and visit amongst his parishioners, join in their merriest laughter, and bear the burden of their troubles.

His preaching, too, it must be remembered, and his oratory in the Church courts, was about as remarkable at this time, though confined to a provincial theatre, as it became afterwards in his days of widest renown. His composition, his delivery, started at once to an early maturity, and were thoroughly characteristic from the beginning. He was always the same in his intellectual powers and external peculiarities: the change came over his beliefs, his subjects, his whole sentiments; but the ascendency of his genius was always confessed. At

college he was the paragon of eloquence as well as of real ability. 'I remember still,' testifies one of his early auditors, Burns of Kilsyth, 'after the lapse of fifty-two years, the powerful impression made by his prayers in the Prayer Hall, to which the people of St. Andrews flocked when they knew that Chalmers was to pray. The wonderful flow of eloquent, vivid, ardent description of the attributes and works of God, and still more, perhaps, the astonishing harrowing delineation of the miseries, the horrid cruelties, immoralities, and abominations inseparable from war, which always came in more or less in connection with the bloody warfare in which we were engaged with France,—called forth the wonderment of the hearers. He was then only sixteen years of age; yet he showed a taste and capacity for composition of the most glowing and eloquent kind. Even then his style was very much the same as at the period when he attracted so much notice, and made such powerful impression in the pulpit and by the press.' Dr. Craik of Libberton (in Lanarkshire), himself a man of solid and vigorous mind, was first

impressed with the high abilities of Chalmers by hearing him in their Debating Society, when he was a youth of sixteen, open on the affirmative side of the question, 'Is a Divine Revelation necessary?' Then, after he was a preacher, his brother James's etching of his first sermon at Wigan will be remembered; and we have also this graphic note from a diary kept at the time by Dr. Duff of Kenmore, under date of 12th September 1802:—'Went out to hear Mr. Thomas Chalmers preach at Denino (about six miles from St. Andrews). Spoke in a strain of glowing eloquence; but was much too violent in gesture, and had none of the graces of good delivery.' Very much what fastidious critics would have said, and did say of him, when he was even in the noon of his fame. One of his neighbours and most intimate acquaintances during his early years in Kilmany, a ripe and correct scholar, and who, in the vicissitudes of his youth, had lived in London, and been in the habit of hearing Burke, and Pitt, and Fox, and Sheridan in the House of Commons, used frequently to mention, after Chalmers had attained his eminence,

'that his abilities were quite as conspicuous when in Kilmany, and that his eloquence, especially sometimes in their Church courts, was quite as astonishing and overpowering.' Though separated from him by the change in his views and his ecclesiastical connections, this gentleman would add with perfect candour: 'None of us were surprised when he became so famous; we all knew he would be the first man in Scotland, though not perhaps in the way that actually turned out.' From all these accounts, we can easily see him, dashing off his sermon quick as the pen could run in the late hours of Saturday night, and then on Sunday thundering away in that dreary oblong barn of a church at Kilmany; and descanting to the bewildered rustics, like a Stoic teacher before the coming of Christ, on all the cardinal and minor virtues, or horrifying them with pictures of bloody war, or rousing their manly breasts to meet and repel the Corsican invader, like undegenerate sons of the

> 'Scots wha ha'e wi' Wallace bled,
> Scots wham Bruce has aften led.'

He held a minister's duties to be very trifling. He asserted, in the pamphlet which has been alluded to, 'from what to him is the highest of all authority, the authority of his own experience, that, after the satisfactory discharge of his parish duties, a minister may enjoy five days in the week in uninterrupted leisure for the prosecution of any science in which his taste may dispose him to engage.' True to his maxim, he toiled away at his mathematics, in the hope of one day being a professor.

So months and years rolled on with Thomas Chalmers at Kilmany, — a powerful, but an *aimless* man!

V.

A NEW MAN.

HE was now definitively relieved from the more gloomy temptations to which he had so long been exposed; the demons of scepticism and materialism fled for ever from his path. So far he had found 'some steady object for his mind to rest upon.' He could rest upon an inward consciousness of God, as the Creator and Supreme Ruler of the universe; he admired His works, and he adored His wisdom and goodness. Further, by the study especially of Butler's *Analogy*, he had satisfied himself that Christianity was from God, and that the Bible had the credentials of a Divine Revelation.

But the low, pestilential atmosphere in which he had lived, had corrupted his blood; and it

was long before all the taints were washed out. He saw little in the Bible but what the elder English Deists had admitted—a republication of the law of nature. It was little more than a code of the purest morality. The death of Christ had, in some manner inexplicable, removed all the obstacles that lay in the way of man's salvation; and man had nothing now to do but obey the commandments of God, and, by a life of virtue, prepare himself for the perfection and unalloyed felicity of heaven. He must do his best, and the death of Christ would make up for his deficiencies. Such was about the sum of his present theology.

He enters at length his thirtieth year. Affliction and bereavement now invade the family, hitherto unbroken. First a brother, George—a sweet brave youth, commander of the ship 'Barton' in the time of the war—though only twenty-three—comes home on a visit, only to die of wounds and exposure. He falls gently asleep, saying, 'I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes.' Next drops a sister Barbara, cut off in

her flowerhood by the fell breath of consumption. Two other sisters are threatened. Good uncle Ballardie dies alone and without warning in the night, is found next morning on his knees, as if he had expired in the act and attitude of prayer. Chalmers himself is laid prostrate with a severe, wasting, and dangerous disease, confined to bed, and forbidden to speak. He is brought to the gates of death; known only to God whether he also is to be swallowed up. For four months he never left his room; for upwards of half a year he never entered the pulpit; it was more than a twelvemonth before he could resume his parochial duties. 'I certainly never saw any person,' said his college friend, Thomas Duncan, 'so much altered in the same space of time, being then greatly attenuated, while formerly he was corpulent. He was scarcely able to walk across the room. It was a year or two before he recovered; and during that period he had much the appearance of an old man, of one who would never be able again for much exertion.'

Changes are going on in the soul even more entire and more eventful than those of the body.

From that dim and lonely chamber issue forth these words: 'My confinement has fixed on my heart a very strong impression of the insignificance of time. . . . This should be the first step to another impression still more salutary—the magnitude of eternity. Strip human life of its connection with a higher scene of existence, and it is the illusion of an instant, an unmeaning farce, a series of visions and projects and convulsive efforts, which terminate in *nothing*.'

We forbear tracing out these changes, which spread over a space of nearly three years. They were not sudden, except in their beginning; they were not violent; they were not terrifying, as some have experienced. They were gradual, total, fundamental, growing as the light grows; they were deep and long as life. By a process of logical exhaustion, as it were, he was finally shut up to these leading conclusions: that he himself and all men are naturally alienated from God, and even in a state of enmity against Him; that divine love hath devised a scheme of reconciliation in the person and mediatorship of Christ; free forgiveness by His atonement; new holy life by His

Spirit. Reconciled, man enters upon eternal life; unreconciled, man is doomed to eternal death.

After his own nature was completely remoulded, so that there never was a man more truly *a new man* than Thomas Chalmers, he proceeded with characteristic intensity to cry aloud to his brethren, and warn them of their infatuation and danger. He likens himself at this time to one who sees his friend rushing towards a precipice, where there must be instant destruction. He flies to his rescue; he warns, entreats, clings to him; kneels and weeps to stop him in his fatal course; and never leaves him till, either deaf to warning, he falls a victim to his folly, or, hearkening to the voice of persuasion, turns aside into the paths of safety.

The humblest, the most unassuming of men in himself, Chalmers now feels that he is charged with a divine message of reconciliation; he rises to the height of his commission, and proclaims to all around—

'*I am an ambassador for Christ!*'

VI.

LAST YEARS IN KILMANY.

HIS manse having become uninhabitable, he had been living for some time at Fincraigs, a healthy, breezy place on the other side of the hill from Kilmany, on the high ground overlooking the Tay. Jane was his ever-delightful housekeeper; but Jane was human, and there was a certain young Mr. Morton, a rising agriculturist of the neighbourhood, coming about the house more frequently than could be explained on the ground of mere common civility. He was very likely, some of these days, to carry away this one ewe lamb. The Anster folks also were trying, by every means in their power, to propel Thomas in the direction of *matrimony*. He was over thirty, and permanently settled; he was engrossed with

study and work; he was absent, careless, and unfit to manage a house; he might soon lose Jane, and be left utterly helpless. But in vain is the snare laid in the sight of any bird; he saw their game, and was quietly resolved to disappoint them; and, besides, he resented their low opinion of his capacity for house management. Then, again, though very amiable in his own way, he disliked control; he would sit free at his own fireside; he vowed himself a confirmed bachelor. 'They wish me to marry,' he growls in his Journal of June 1811. 'It is not their own accommodation they want; it is their idea of my incapacity for housekeeping that prompts their arrangements. I do not feel this incapacity; and, upon the principle of consulting my own soul in every good work, should I not come to a frank explanation, if ever any new arrangement be proposed to me? Let me stick by Jane; and in every other way but in that of bettering myself with a constant housekeeper'—('*constant housekeeper*'—misogamist that thou art, is that the name to give to a wife?)—'let me spare no manifestation of friendship and regard for my other relations. If the offensive

peculiarities of others be so apt to distress me, why hazard my future tranquillity upon a wife?' His determination is taken—bachelorism and tranquillity!

So during these years, amid all his internal conflicts, and his incessant labours as student and pastor, he has his comforts too, and his relaxations, and the freedom of single-blessedness. Old John Bonthron keeps dropping in upon him, with his familiarities and garrulities. His stock of patience, sometimes easily exhausted, is put to severe trials by his younger brother Sandy, who laughs at old John, and is guilty of the various other provocations of youth; but how he watches like a nurse, and weeps in secret like a mother, when Sandy falls into sickness, and reminds him of so many brothers and sisters cut off in their prime! Then he roves about amongst his acquaintances; makes starts to Dundee, to St. Andrews, to Edinburgh; and his own hospitality, on a small income too, is inexhaustible as the fabled horn of plenty. His heritors (the landowners of his parish), who are proud of their minister, have accorded him a new manse, and left the plan of it very much to

his own discretion; so here is a field for his science, taste, and activity. He selected a better situation than the old manse; superintended the building; introduced gas tubes for the future lighting of the house, the stumps of which are still preserved in the ceiling as a memorial of his prescience. He planted belts of trees; and laid out his garden in geometric beds, with the regular series of botanical genera and species.

On the 22d of November 1810, he enters his new domains in triumph.

In January 1812, young Morton, now settled in Somersetshire, comes and carries away the sweetest ornament of his new manse, his sister Jane. Entry in his Journal:—'*Jan.* 23.—I took a hurried adieu of my dear Jane, whose departure from Kilmany threw me into repeated fits of tenderness.' But these fits of tenderness do not melt the hard clay of his bachelorism; they only confirm him the more in 'my determination not to marry. . . I never intended to save money; and with my income as it is, I shall be able to live easily, indulge in a good many literary expenses, and command an occasional jaunt to London.'

As you enter the parish of Kilmany from the west, under the sentinel's eye of the lordly Norman Law, you are suddenly charmed by the sight of a little snug mansion, shining white on the hill-side to the left, from amidst a rich embowering grove. It seems to smile welcome to the traveller as he enters the vale. This is *Starbank;* and was occupied in these days by Mr. Simson, I know not of what calling, but I suppose farmer or proprietor. He had at this time a niece living with him, Grace Pratt, daughter, we are told, 'of Captain Pratt of the 1st Royal Veteran Battalion.' Our confirmed bachelor was in the habit of visiting Starbank as he visited other places; and he saw Grace Pratt—but *not* as he saw other faces. In the month of June—five months after his sister Jane had left him—the confirmed bachelor is found thus writing in his Journal:—'O my God, pour Thy best blessings on Grace! Give her ardent and decided Christianity. May she be the blessing and the joy of all around her. May her light shine while she lives; and when she dies, may it prove to be a mere step, a transition in her march to a joyful eternity!'

Most beautifully and piously said! But, after this, who will believe the vows of confirmed bachelors?

Abundant and glowing testimonies prove that he found in matrimony the tranquillity which he would have vainly sought in singleness. The character of Grace Pratt of Starbank that was, Mrs. Chalmers that became, as it shone in its maturity, has been thus praised by a most praiseworthy man, Dr. Smyth, assistant to Chalmers in Glasgow, who lived for some time in the family, and who was finally one of the most revered of the Free Church ministers of that city:—

'Possessed of talents decidedly superior, of large and varied information, of warm-hearted affections, and of what is infinitely better, enlightened and decided piety, Mrs. Chalmers commanded the esteem and the confidence of her family and her friends. Her judgment was calm, sound, and comprehensive. She possessed a tact and a delicacy of perception which fitted her for being a wise and faithful counsellor. . . Her discernment of character was remarkable. It seemed as if by intuition she could at once

discriminate between the true and the false-hearted, and yet there was the charity that hopeth all things. As a wife, a mother, a mistress, a friend, a disciple of Him who was meek and lowly in spirit, few are better entitled to affection's warmest tribute.'

Now congenially fixed in his domestic relations, and deepening every day in his own experience of the Christian life, he consecrated himself with a devotion unknown and unfelt before to fulfil the whole duties of his ministry as an ambassador for Christ. He noway slackened—indeed he was more diligent than ever—in the discharge of the more secular duties of his office, such as the oversight of the education, and the management of the poor of his parish; but the spiritual duties, once so lightly regarded, now rose in his estimation to a magnitude and grandeur almost overwhelming. He trembled at the accountability of his stewardship. With what frequency, with what affectionateness, both as a friend and a pastor, did he visit amongst the families, and examine them in their knowledge of religion, and instruct them in righteousness, and endeavour to lead the way by an

example of devoutness, kindness, and sincerity! How constant was he, and how welcome was he, at the bed of sickness and impending death; how plain-dealing yet gentle in his admonitions; how rich in consolation; how peculiarly happy in his explanations, especially to the humble and benighted! He had quite a special talent in knowing the significance of old Scottish words and phrases; and often, in his visitations to the sick and dying, he made use of them in such a way as threw a sudden flash of brightness into minds too dark and feeble to apprehend even the commonest terms of theology. The Scotch word 'to lippen,' for instance, has a fine and exquisite meaning amongst the common people. 'To lippen to a person,' is to trust him from full confidence both in his *truth* and his *power* and his *love*. Chalmers was one day urging an old woman who was on her deathbed, and was anxious but ignorant, 'to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,' when she interrupted him, 'Believe, believe! but what is it *to believe?*'

'*Lippen to Him!*' said Chalmers.

'*Lippen to Him!* ay, I understand that.'

He was now also the most active promoter

of Bible and Missionary Societies; and he was political economist enough to mark and store up amongst his data for future use the astonishing productiveness of *penny-a-week subscriptions*, —that 'accumulation of littles,' as he came to call it, which, fruitful as the idea of the Penny Post, was to be the secret of much of his future finance. For some years he had been as close and laborious a student of theology as he used to be of mathematics, and with more abundant fruit; for he published at this time (1814), first in the *Edinburgh Encyclopædia*, then as a separate work, his *Evidences of the Christian Religion*.

But, as ambassador for Christ, his main vocation was to *preach the gospel*. Instead of the running scrawl of Saturday night, he bestowed immense pains on the composition of his sermons. They were the diplomatic notes in his embassy, and could not be too carefully thought out, too persuasively expressed. His personal experience for the three past years, apart from his theological reading, supplied him with inexhaustible store of thought, of guidance for others; and out of the fulness of his own heart,

rather than from books and systems, he poured forth upon his congregation an impetuous but pure and transparent river of vital Christian truth. The intensity of the man fired up his whole being, body as well as mind. Though his delivery became less spasmodic, less reckless, it lost nothing of its thundering force; only it was more solemn, more alarming, more imploring; the eye which one moment darted the fire of reproof, was bathed the next moment in the tears of pity and of love. Every limb, every muscle of the body, as well as every faculty of the mind, were pressed into the service of his Master; and such at times was the tremendousness of his discourses, that he hurled his own flaming convictions as by force into the souls of his hearers.

On the urgency of friends and admirers, he had frequently attempted to preach extempore. 'If that man,' said Andrew Fuller, the famous Baptist minister and theologian, who had been down on a missionary tour in Scotland, and had heard Chalmers preach,—'If that man would but throw away his papers in the pulpit, he might be king of Scotland.' He threw away

his papers ; he sedulously tried to extemporize ; but his efforts ended in total failure. It was not for want of nerve, for, as we have seen, he was a strong, sturdy, courageous man, of indomitable resolution. It was not lack of material, for in that he superabounded ; it was not from treacherousness of memory, for that was most retentive and methodical. It was from no want of vivacity and spirit, for he had these in excess. Instead of any want, it was from intellectual plethora. His mind was so full of his subject, yet so mathematically anxious that every premise should be understood, every proof followed, that, without the confining mould of a written composition, he could not restrain and regulate his ideas ; he could not keep them in shape and fluxion ; and when time was up, he found himself only in the middle of some preliminary explanation. He used often to remark, 'that in one quality he seemed to resemble Rousseau, who said of himself, that he was *slow* but *ardent*.' The slowness and the ardour were equally unfavourable to extempore preaching. He sometimes compared himself to a bottle full of liquid ; when suddenly turned up, it cannot flow from

its very fulness, not a drop comes out at first, and for a while only bursts and splutters. He deliberately gave up the attempt to preach extempore, and commonly adhered closely to his manuscript. But, on the other hand, he composed rapidly, and with a constant view to an audience, so that his compositions had all the animation of extempore; and then, from his intensity, and from practice, his reading far transcended any other man's delivery in fervour and in force. The manuscript was never thought of, as people thrilled under the blaze of that face, and the lightning sweep of that arm. As the old woman said of him, 'Ah, it's fell reading, *yon!*' He did not throw away his papers in the pulpit, and yet he was king of Scotland. So impossible is it to calculate from ordinary rules, when you have to deal with a man of original power.

The little sequestered kirk of Kilmany—'the church of the valley'—once so thinly attended, and the few so careless, was now crowded in every corner, even the standing space, not by the parish folk only, but by strangers from afar, from Dundee, from Edinburgh; all were watch-

ing with interest, some with awe, this strange sight — this man, with such marvellous power, preaching the very doctrines of the gospel which so lately he had disbelieved and reviled. No one looking at him there, hearing him there, in that dingy old pulpit of Kilmany, but felt that he was in training to break up the commonplace and apathy of Scotland, and to agitate her whole frame with new impulses and new ideas.

It is difficult for us, at this distance of time, and in the altered condition of things, fully to realize the sensation which was created throughout Scotland by the sudden and extraordinary prominence attained by the minister of Kilmany — his sudden *conversion* from a vague naturalism to the most advanced belief in the doctrines of the gospel, and his transcendent powers as a preacher. Every one at all intimate with the inner life, the spiritual history of Scotland, and who has any even philosophic sympathy with such things, will admit that a new era commenced, in national opinion and action, about this year 1814. The only thing in our own time that bears analogy to it, though

totally different in type, was the outburst of *English Tractarianism* in 1834.

By the end of the eighteenth century, from various operating causes,—such as, the reimposition of patronage, the secularism of the clergy, the secessions of the stricter men, the scepticism of Hume, the leaven of high Tory politics,—the Church of Scotland had got stranded, high and dry, on that sandbank called *Moderatism*. Now Moderatism had not one particle of anything vital; was neither true Christian nor good pagan; had neither the unction of Knox, nor the yearning desire for truth and goodness of an Epictetus or a Cicero. It was the wish-wash of a contemptible clergy, drawn chiefly from poor relations, family tutors, and the stupidest sons of the corruptest Scottish voters. The people—counting many of the sounder gentry, the farmers and merchants, as well as the peasantry—had a keen relish for what they called, in opposition to Moderatism, the *gospel;* but, in this sense, they could hardly find the gospel within the pale of the Established Church. Still, as in the worst days of the Papacy, so in the Church of Scotland, there had been a thin

line of confessors all through the successive generations. We may mention, amongst others, the saintly Thomas Boston, the grave and thoughtful John Erskine, the experienced and commanding Sir Harry Moncreiff; and lastly, from about the year 1810, the redoubted Andrew Thomson, lion in look and soul, always armed, always ready for combat, always victorious, only requiring a wider platform and wilder times to prove himself the genuine successor of Knox. This valiant line of confessors only wanted a king-man; one of those who, in their time, stamp a people into the likeness of their own image, and who bring what had hitherto been a struggle, into completion and unity. That consummation arrived in Chalmers. Thenceforth the Church of Scotland was raised from the state of senility into which it had fallen; and was again acknowledged by its people, and by Christendom, as a *gospel Church*, that is, a Church both teaching the peculiar doctrines, and endeavouring to realize the spirit and fruits of a living Christianity.

Andrew Thomson,—generous as fierce, with the nobleness of John the Baptist, who pro-

claimed of the greater than himself, 'He must increase, but I must decrease,'—said to one of his intimate friends, 'Go to such a church in Edinburgh on Sabbath: Chalmers of Kilmany is to preach. Come and tell me what you think of him, for I cannot go. From all I hear, I believe that man is to be the STAR of the first magnitude in Scotland!'

VII.

GLASGOW AND CHALMERS.

GLASGOW, even then the most active, wealthy, and prosperous city in Scotland, not to be surpassed even in England, which means the world, was now also quickening with a higher order of ambition, and was drawing to herself all the rising men that could be found, as professors and clergymen. No sooner had she heard of the fame of Thomas Chalmers than she called him to her Tron Church, in the very heart of her densest population; and from thenceforth she made him her own. Although he was only eight years in Glasgow, and was afterwards twenty years in Edinburgh, his name always calls up the recollection, not of the latter, but of the former city. The names of Chalmers and of

Glasgow are entwined, as Ambrose with Milan, Savonarola with Florence, Knox with Edinburgh, Hall with Leicester, Lacordaire with Paris. He will ever be—*Chalmers of Glasgow!*

From a hamlet attached to a cathedral on the bend of the Clyde towards the sea, the city of St. Mungo had grown up into the Tyre of Scotland; and from a population of 13,000 at the Union, had multiplied by the time Chalmers came to it to a population of more than 100,000. From about the middle of the eighteenth century she rose to be queen of commerce and manufactures. Her merchants used to have the whole British trade with the slave states of America, and with the slave-masters of the West Indies. That was the time of the *Virginians*, who strutted about on their own side of the Trongate, apart from vulgar mortals, in scarlet and gold cloaks, rich velvet under-dress, cocked hats, tasselled canes, and silver buckles at knee and instep. Afterwards, when slavery, like all tyranny, found 'it had a lith in its neck,' the busy, money-making people turned to more innocent means of wealth—to cotton, and iron, and ship-

building, and shipping, with steam-mills and steam-furnaces, and all the other coining-pots of fortune. Like other cities of the same type, Mammon was the universal idol, and the Exchange was the new cathedral.

The population naturally ranged itself into four classes. There was an inner circle of established families, the debris of the *Virginians;* then there was a swarm of the new-rich, curling up like the smoke of their own chimneys; there was a small lettered class, professors and professionals, keeping separate from the dough around them, and diffusing little of their leaven into the lump; and at bottom was the usual great dense heap of human machines doing the servile work for the knowing and bustling ones above them. My authorities report as follows concerning Glasgow at that time. Infidelity—the nihilism of the Hume school—prevailed largely amongst the upper families, with the dissoluteness of conduct which springs from idleness, good cheer, a full purse, the wish to be thought fashionable, and the licence allowed to libertines if only they be rich. Then, again, the

herd of Church-and-king burgesses of that period, wide-awake in pounds, shillings, and pence, were, as regards religion, drenched in the dead sleep of Moderatism. The popular masses, whether toilers or vagabonds, were in a fearful proportion grovelling away in long-settled squalor and drunkenness, discord and misery, in the slough of *home-heathenism*.

That was the dark side of the picture. But there was also a bright side, otherwise the nobler souls of the world would wither on the stalk and die out in despair.

The prevailing state of comfort and wealth had imparted to the general inhabitants a fine gloss of sociality,—the hospitality of Glasgow was proverbial. The new-rich, if they had little artificial culture, were shrewd, judicious, and enterprising, large givers from their large receipts; and being loaded with no traditional rubbish, they were singularly open to new ideas, and to impressions from some new master-mind. There was little distinction of rank amongst them, except with the few Virginians and literati. The rich men had become rich side by side, and continued to be boon companions; and as they

had all risen from the ranks, they had still their relatives and their former friends and acquaintances in the humbler class, whom they had not learned to despise. The masters still, very commonly, lived in the same quarters with the men, not on Loch Long and Loch Lomond. The families, therefore, had not sunk out of view of one another. The master knew most of his men personally; the mistress would sometimes visit the wives, at least in cases of sickness or trouble, or even as her early acquaintances; the children went to the same school and church, played together on Glasgow Green, and chummed in their Saturday rambles to the woods of Kelvin, or the banks of Bothwell. Pleasanter, I should say, than modern pride and desolation, when the workmen are total strangers, and those stiff county people won't condescend to exchange visits! The working class, less contaminated than now with Irish and foreign admixture, had the sound Scottish education; and multitudes of them, amid all the town temptations, preserved their intelligence and integrity, their Scottish self-respect and decency and piety. Glasgow never had the

hardness common in manufacturing towns. It had always a breath of the country air, a touch of the genial primitive manners. For one thing, there was a large infusion of the Celtic element in which Matthew Arnold delights, —the element of instinctive poetry and sensibility, enthusiasm and devotion. Glasgow must still have held much of the ancient British blood of Strath-Clyde; and the ancient blood was reinvigorated with Gaels from Cantyre and Lorn and the Hebrides, and no less with 'wild Scots' from Galloway. As the worthy Gallowegian boasted, when some one remarked how many Stranraer people were in Glasgow: 'Ou ay! ye see Glasgow was made for the Stranraer folk the same as Liverpool for the folk o' Dumfries.' The people, though rich and money-loving, were neither rude, nor sordid, nor repulsive. On the contrary, they were free with their money, generous, straightforward, and manly, public-spirited, ready with time and means for any good cause. They were quite the people, in short, to yield themselves up to the fascination of Chalmers, and give him for leverage, in all his sacred and

philanthropic enterprises, the whole strength and nobleness of their city.

He was elected minister of the Tron on the 25th of November 1814, but not formally admitted till the month of July 1815. Though 'his heart was wedded to the hills of Kilmany,' as he mournfully said on leaving; yet he could not but feel, and did feel, that he now required the vantage-ground of a *great city*, to enable him to realize those schemes of national revival and usefulness which had long been brooding in his mind.

VIII.

THE IDEALS OF HIS LIFE.

HE carried with him from Kilmany to Glasgow not only the responsibilities of a divine embassy to the souls of individuals, he also carried certain ideals having reference to the welfare of men viewed collectively as a nation. It was in the development of these ideals that his life rose to a public importance—from that of merely a great preacher to that of a *great man*. These ideals were — the full realization of the parochial system; the inherent self-governing power of the Church; the extinction of pauperism, combined with the general elevation of the working class.

Parochial System.

The *parish* (meaning more particularly at present the rural parish as it existed say in 1814), by the law and custom of Scotland, was a very peculiar and independently organized community. It may be of various dimensions, but we shall suppose it of such moderate size that one may easily walk or ride to any part of it, and visit numerous families, in the course of a single day. There may be only a few hundred inhabitants, but we shall suppose a thousand. Generally there is one great landowner,—the ancestral magnate of the district,—with a number of other proprietors, small, but of good old family. Then there are the farmers great and small, a few shopkeepers and tradesmen, less or more substantial, with the mass of handicraftsmen and ploughmen and labourers, and always some nameless residuum—imbecile, vagrant, or ne'er-do-weel. But the prominent features, the characteristic symbols of the Scottish parish, are — the *parish church*, standing in some central spot for the Sabbath worship of the inhabitants, with the pleasant manse of the minister; and generally, at no great distance, the *parish*

school, for the education of the young of both sexes and of all the families in the parish, with the decent though humble abode of the dominie. The heart of the parish beats *there*,—in that church and that schoolhouse, with the dwellings of the minister and schoolmaster. The minister has his kirk-session,—his eight or ten of the gravest and most influential men of the parish,—who assist him with their advice, and help him in carrying out the plans of his pastorate, whether bearing upon the moral and religious superintendence of the parishioners, or upon the business of the various ecclesiastical courts, the presbyteries and synods and assemblies. Besides the religious instruction and superintendence, the minister with his session have practically the whole other management of the parish, except what can only be exercised by the higher authorities or the civil tribunals; they have, for instance, practically at least, the oversight of the schoolmaster, the care and examination of the scholars, and the regulation and relief of the poor.

Chalmers, therefore, from his pastorate in Kilmany, had the image thoroughly imprinted on his mind of the Scottish parish,—the church

with its manse, the school and schoolhouse, the encircling homesteads and villages of the parishioners; every individual personally known and frequently visited; and amongst them the poor and distressed, whose individual cases must be considered, with mercy indeed, but also with discrimination and firmness.

'This is the home-walk,'—so he records the labours and delights of his own experience,—'in which is earned, if not a proud, at least a peaceful popularity, the popularity of the heart,—the greetings of men who, touched even by the cheapest and easiest services of kindness, have nothing to give but their wishes of kindness back again; but in giving these, have crowned such pious attentions with the only popularity that is worth the aspiring after—the popularity that is won in the bosom of families and at the side of death-beds.'

Self-governing power of the Church.

Along with the increasing strength of his evangelical views, and the increasing devotion to his parochial duties, there grew up a deeper and deeper feeling of the spirituality and indepen-

dence of the Church—of the Church of Christ as an idea, of the Church of Scotland as an institution. His idea of the Christian Church generally, was that of a body holding its constitution solely from its Founder through His word; and therefore, within its religious province, subject alone to His authority as declared in His word, and subject to no other control. Then, as an institution, the Church of Scotland, he contended, had always expressly and emphatically avowed this to be its constitution; and the State, consequently, in establishing it, had recognised this principle as a condition of the establishment.

These sentiments were most pointedly elicited by what is called Ferrie's case in the General Assembly of 1814, whilst he was yet minister of Kilmany, and were republished in his *Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns*, in the early years of his Glasgow ministry. So unfounded is the insinuation which some have made, that he only clutched at these wild notions about 1840, to justify his rebellion at the time of the Disruption. Thirty years before the Disruption he anticipated the whole

controversy, laid deep the principle of the Church's independence in things pertaining to religion, and grappled inch by inch with the very arguments on which Lord Cottenham and Lord Brougham in 1839 confirmed the famous Auchterarder case, and at the same time sapped the foundations of all the Established Churches in the kingdom.

In the course of the discussions in 1814, Chalmers in the broadest manner asserted the independence of the Church as to the ordination of its ministers.

'The absolute right of patrons is altogether a visionary principle. . . . The man who comes to our bar with a presentation to a living, has acquired no absolute right of property till he has obtained our consent to his induction. A presentation carries along with it no absolute right of property. It is only a right of property with submission to the judgment of the Church. . . . This subordinates the right of the patron to that high function of the Church, by which it sits in authority over every question involving in it the interests of religion.'

And then, on the very point which afterwards

determined the judgment of the House of Lords :—

'For the purpose of limiting the Church in the exercise of this right, it has been contended that her judgment on the fitness of the presentee is restricted *to the mere question of his moral and literary qualifications.* . . . The Church is not at all limited to particular grounds. . . . She can set aside any presentee, and that generally on the principle that it is not for the cause of edification that his presentation should be sustained. . . . They may put their conclusive veto on any presentation for any reason, or if they choose, for no reason at all. Even though there should be manifest injustice in their decision, there exists not, without the limits of the Church, any one legal or constitutional provision against such a possibility. The only security, in fact, is that a Church so constituted as ours will not be unjust.'

He valued an Established Church, not as a priest but as a philanthropist,—not for the aggrandisement of an order, but for the instruction, improvement, and consolation of the people. If it was to be a clean, efficient instrument, it

must be independent of the soiling fingers of party governments, and party politics, and interested dealers in patronage. To be of any use, the Church must be the voice of Heaven to man, as nearly as anything human can be; that is, an institution that gives pure and undictated expression to the law of God, to which both rulers and ruled should submit themselves. But if the Church is manipulated by the State, —that is, by the party in power for the time,— of what real honest use or good can it be to the people? Is it anything but another bureau, like the Police or the Home Office, where the religious business is transacted by direction of the Government? If religion is to be of any use,—if the whole be not a political juggle,— then the State must not muddle the water or throw mixtures of their own into the stream, so that the people shall only drink a government compound; the people must be left to draw the water fresh and pure as it wells out of the fountainhead. Erastianism destroys the Church which it handles: it is no more a Church, but an office for the sale of a political liquid called Religion.

Pauperism.

To *Pauperism* he had very early directed his attention. We have seen that Political Economy was one of his earliest studies. It was a study most congenial at once to his warm feeling of interest in all that related to humanity, and to his habits of inductive reasoning. None of its discussions more deeply interested his benevolence and curiosity than the condition of the *indigent poor*, and the means of ameliorating that condition. We find him collecting materials for this study when he resided in the neighbourhood of Hawick in 1802, afterwards in Kilmany, and by correspondence from 1814 downwards with his brother-in-law Mr. Morton, residing in Somersetshire, where the English poor laws were riding rampant. These, with other and continual observations, confirmed his hostility to compulsory assessment for the relief of pauperism, and riveted his trust in the adequacy of spontaneous benevolence, if left free and untouched. As he recorded in 1814,—'It is quite vain to think that positive relief will ever do away the wretchedness of poverty. Carry the

relief beyond a certain limit, and you foster the diseased principle which gives birth to poverty. . . . . The remedy against the extension of pauperism does not lie in the liberalities of the rich, it lies in the hearts and habits of the poor. Plant in their bosoms a principle of independence; give a high tone of delicacy to their characters; teach them to recoil from pauperism as a degradation.'

He draws a dark and hideous picture of what pauperism must become, if allowed to eat away into the entrails of the nation, and if merely dealt with in some of its symptoms, and not boldly assailed at the roots. The picture has become a reality, under which both England and Scotland are now almost helplessly shuddering.

'We hold pauperism to be a . . . deadly antagonist to the morality of a nation. . . . It effecteth its work of destruction upon the character of man more by sap than by storm. The family virtues have not been swept away by it with the violence of an inundation, but they have drooped and languished, and at the end of a few generations, are now ready to

expire. The mildew which it has sprinkled over the face of the community has fallen in small and successive quantities from its hand; and it is only by an addition made every year to this deleterious blight that the evil at length is consummated. Like the malaria in Italy, it has now attained a progress and a virulency which begin to be contemplated with the awe of some great approaching desolation; and a sense of helplessness mingles with the terror which is inspired by the forebodings of a mighty disaster, that has been gathering along the lapse of time into more distinct shape and more appalling magnitude.'

IX.

FIRST SERMON IN GLASGOW.

HIS first sermon in Glasgow was in aid of the Society for the Sons of the Clergy, and was preached on a week-day, the 30th of March 1815—four months before his formal admission as minister of the Tron. As was to be expected, the curiosity to hear him was extreme; and the teeming crowds in attendance was the beginning of those enormous and rapt assemblages that ever afterwards hung upon his ministrations. He was yet, however, untried in the great world, and curiosity was mingled with doubt. Would he unquestionably succeed, or would he egregiously fail? It was felt there was no middle fate for him; mediocrity and Chalmers could not go together; there lay before him, either the

immediate oblivion of the sky-rocket, or the glory of the first pulpit orator of his age.

Amongst those squeezed into the crowd that day was a young Oxford student, home to his native Lanarkshire—John Gibson Lockhart—the pink of the most fastidious university culture, brilliant and quizzical, too knowing to be carried away by any trickery or mannerism, with more of the critical than of the admiring in his mood, and little susceptible of the emotions of religion. Curiosity had brought Lockhart thither; also the accident that he had heard the preacher's *Evidences of Christianity* spoken of with applause even in the superfine class-rooms of Oxford. Borrowing the aid of his young, keenly discerning eyes, and those of the amiable, shrewd, and more sympathetic Dean Ramsay, who, either then or afterwards, heard the same sermon, aided with some recollections of our own of what he was in his later days, we can transport ourselves with no great effort of the imagination back to the scene, and renew all the varied and vivid experiences of that audience.

The light on the pulpit is dim as the preacher

enters; and to one who sees him for the first time, and has an image in his mind of some dignified and commanding orator, there must be a shock of disappointment. A figure middle-sized, manly and square-built, but with something strange and uncouth,—a manner abrupt and confused, sometimes like embarrassment, sometimes like irreverence,—a face heavy and deadly pale, with features strongly marked, almost to coarseness: can this be the Chalmers whose lips drop manna, whose arm summons forth, or allays, the most vehement passions of man? He comes forward and reads out the psalm, the first act of Scottish worship, but with cracked and untuneable voice, strained, yet scarcely audible, and with a slumberous countenance which emits no gleam of radiance or of feeling. The light, however, is now increasing, and dissipates the obscurity which hung about the pulpit. The devotional exercises are touching his soul and animating his look: long before the sermon is commenced we have traced, though in forms different from our preconceptions, the marks of correspondence which generally exist between a grand mind

and the bodily organization through which it manifests itself. The head, with its crisp dark locks, is a mighty mass, yet nobly proportioned; the forehead of unusual breadth and knotted firmness, resembling that of the great mathematicians, but rising to an elevation and a symmetry at the temples, which remind us of the poet, and of the devout and lofty-minded enthusiast. The eyes, lack-lustre at first, dull of expression, pressed down by long eyelids, have a mystic dreaminess; or again, even in repose, kindle to a lightning flash, which foretokens the inward-gathering blaze of thought, of fancy, and of high purposes. The under part of the face, struggling curiously between heaviness of form and ever-varying quickness of expression, balances, by its practical-looking qualities, the ideality and abstraction which mark the upper part. The broad square cheeks,—the firm-set, deep-marked lip,—the strong jaw and chin,—the play both of humour and of a certain finesse, a knowingness not to be done, about the corners of the mouth,—give an impress of sturdy sense, of keen observation, of a certain plain and unceremonious

way of treating things, of a turn for occasional boisterous merriment, and joyous unrestrained laughter, of patient industry, and an altogether unconquerable resolution; whilst again, the meek downcast look that so habitually comes over the eye, and the air of pensiveness that so often shades the whole aspect, disclose the depth of pity, of sympathy, of love for man, which work evermore at the inmost core of his heart.

But our study of the outer man is arrested: he rises and announces his text: 'Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

Yet the same dulness, almost stolidity of demeanour, has again settled down upon him; he looks awkward and constrained; the same harsh croaking tone, the same ungainly manner, and that broad Fife tongue. How can this man be an orator? See how he bends over the paper, follows it with his finger, reads every word from it like a schoolboy! Where can be the freedom of voice and action, the sudden electrifying burst, the eye lighted up by the brightening eyes of his hearers, the higher enthusiasm inspired into himself by the enthu-

siasm with which he is inspiring others? Hear —but you can hardly hear—his ragged, disjointed sentences, as to the many sayings of our Lord which must have floated about amongst the early disciples, one of which is preserved in the text: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' He speaks with an expression almost of pain, as if his chest were weak; his motions indicate feeble perplexity; instead of a striking exordium, there is triteness and platitude.

He now begins to describe the blessedness of the *giver*. His first reason is, that the giver is forming himself after the image of God, which, says the preacher, 'is the great purpose of the dispensation we sit under.' His words now become more emphatic, his manner more steady and impressive. The overflowing goodness of God takes hold of his imagination as if by a sudden spell.

'A mighty tide of communication from God to His creatures has been kept up incessantly from the first hour of creation. It flows without intermission. It spreads over the whole extent of the universe He has formed. It

carries light and sustenance and enjoyment through the wide dominions of nature and of providence. It reaches to the very humblest individual among His children. There is not one shred or fragment in the awful immensity of His works which is overlooked by Him.'

'Nor must we think, with the mere naturalist,'—he goes on to argue,—'that our God is without any emotion in His ineffable being, without anything analogous to human feeling; that He gives from the mere overflow of an infinite fulness, but with an affection untouched.

'This, I think, is not the lesson of the Bible. He who hath seen the Father, and is alone competent to declare Him, gives me a somewhat different view of what I venture to call the constitution of the Deity . . . When we are told that "God *so* loved the world as to send His only begotten Son into it, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," what is the meaning of the emphatic *so?*' The preacher answers with a fervour which is now communicating its glow to every bosom:

'It means nothing at all, if God, in the act

of giving up His Son to death, did not make the same kind of sacrifice with the parent who, amid the agonies of his struggling bosom, surrenders his only child to some call of duty or of patriotism. . . . Dismiss then, my brethren, all your scholastic conceptions of the Deity, and keep by that warm and affecting view of Him that we have in the Bible. For if we do not, we will lose the impression of many of its most moving arguments, and our hearts will remain shut against its most powerful and pathetic representations of the character of God.'

Slowly is the man becoming manifest — the great preacher of his age—one of the most prevailing preachers of any age! No more constraint now, no more awkwardness, no more feebleness of voice and manner: he has the mastery of his subject, he has the mastery of his audience. The voice, without sweetness or melody indeed, has the thrill of the clarion, summoning to battle for the right, and against all wrong and evil. The eye, which was dull and half-closed, is all on fire with intelligence and rapture and zeal. Every member of the

body is penetrated as with Heaven's message: the breast heaves with the tumult of only half-uttered thoughts; the strong arm is uplifted in rebuke, or spread out with proffers of mercy; the very feet are heard to thunder, as if stamping the solemn truths upon the soul. Reasoning, illustration, appeal, with swift successive strokes, carry captive every mind. The foolish are illuminated; the weak are nerved with unknown vigour; even the wise men after the flesh lay aside their arrogance, and once more bend in devoutness and humility, as when, little children at their earthly mother's knee, they would repeat, 'Our Father who art in heaven!'

He pleads, in conclusion, for his *orphan* clients, the sons of those of the clergy who have been taken by their Master from the service below to the sanctuary above; whose flocks must now pass to new shepherds, and whose once cheerful manses can no longer be the sheltering fold of their children. *The breaking up of the manse*—to himself what a mournful theme! He still bore the wounds of his own removal from the manse of Kilmany, with a bitterness almost like that of death; and tenderly, therefore, could he

sympathize with those whom the reality of death had torn from a home which is generally so peaceful, and the peculiar halo of which, once broken, no new associations can restore.

'The sympathies of a man are ever most alive to those distresses which may fall upon himself; and it is for a minister to feel the deepest emotion at the sad picture of a breaking up of a minister's family. When the sons and the daughters of clergymen are left to go, they know not whither, from the peacefulness of their father's dwelling, never were poor outcasts less prepared by the education and the habits of former years for the scowl of an unpitying world; nor can I figure a drearier or more affecting contrast than that which obtains between the blissful security of their earlier days, and the dark and unshielded condition to which the hand of Providence has now brought them. . . . When they look abroad and survey the innumerable beauties which the God of nature has scattered so profusely around them; when they see the sun throwing its unclouded splendour over the whole neighbourhood; when, on the fair side of the year, they

behold the smiling aspect of the country, and at every footstep they take, some flower appears in its loveliness, or some bird offers its melody to delight them; when they see quietness on all the hills, and every field glowing in the pride and luxury of vegetation; when they see summer throwing its rich garment over this goodly scene of magnificence and glory; and think in the bitterness of their souls, that this is the last summer which they shall ever witness smiling on that scene which all the ties of habit and of affection have endeared to them; when this thought, melancholy as it is, is lost and overborne in the far darker melancholy of a father torn from their embrace, and a helpless family left to find their way unprotected and alone through the lowering futurity of this earthly pilgrimage,—do you wonder'—and as he speaks the tears come in rain-drops from his eyes, and his voice is broken with frequent sobs, whilst something like a wail of pity spreads all through the audience—'do you wonder that their feeling hearts should be ready to lose hold of the promise—that He, who decks the lily fair in flowery pride, will guide them in safety

through the world, and at last raise all who believe in Him to the bloom and the vigour of immortality? The flowers of the field, they toil not, neither do they spin, yet your heavenly Father careth for them; and how much more careth He for *you*, O ye of little faith!'

X.

THE ASTRONOMICAL SERMONS.

FROM this time forth Chalmers steadily rose in fame, until he took rank amongst the foremost pulpit orators of his age; and not unworthy to compare with any in any age, of whom history or tradition has preserved the memorials. His sudden and boundless popularity, however, seemed to originate in an accident.

When he came to Glasgow in 1815, it was the custom of the city clergy to preach by rotation in the Tron Church every Thursday. It came to the turn of Chalmers on the 23d of November. Though a week-day, and the busiest time of the day, the attendance was large; the admiration for him amongst all classes had now risen to a passion. It is

not likely that any one was aware of the subject on which he was to expatiate. His text was from the Psalms: 'When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?'

This was the first of his *Astronomical Sermons*. It had not then become common to popularize science; and any treatises or lectures meant for common use were brief, meagre, and uninteresting. Natural science, except for an occasional simile or illustration, had well-nigh been banished from the pulpit. But Chalmers knew science, and loved it; and now when he was an Evangelical, as much as when he was a mere Naturalist, he disdained all bigotry, all fanaticism, all disposition to break off the connection of Christianity with every subject and every interest in the wide universe. What then was the delight, when, from his text, he poured forth upon the people, with exactitude of knowledge, and a gorgeousness of eloquence which even he had never before exhibited, all the most recent discoveries and the dawning

presentiments of the modern Astronomy! He led out his enchanted audience to gaze on 'the scenery of a nocturnal sky.' He pointed to the brilliant lustre of the planets, their movements in the firmament, the proofs that they are immensely larger than our earth. 'Why . . . suppose that this little spot,—little, at least, in the immensity which surrounds it,—should be the exclusive abode of life and of intelligence? What reason to think that those mightier globes which roll in other parts of creation, and which we have discovered to be worlds in magnitude, are not also worlds in use and in dignity?' He plies the various indications that these planets must be inhabited. 'Shall we . . . conceive that silence and solitude reign throughout the mighty empire of nature? that the greater part of creation is an empty parade? and that not a worshipper of the Divinity is to be found through the wide extent of yon vast and immeasurable regions?' But beyond the limit of the planetary worlds, are not our heavens studded with thousands and millions of other luminaries, that are evidently as great and glorious as the planets, nay, as the sun in our

own system? What of these? 'Are they only made to shed a feeble glimmering over this little spot in the kingdom of nature? or do they serve a purpose worthier of themselves, to light up other worlds, and give animation to other systems?' He can no longer restrain his own enthusiasm, and he only gives utterance to that of his audience, when he demands:

'Why resist any longer the grand and interesting conclusion? Each of these stars may be the token of a system as vast and as splendid as the one which we inhabit. Worlds roll in these distant regions; and these worlds must be the mansions of life and of intelligence. In yon gilded canopy of heaven we see the broad aspect of the universe, where each shining point presents us with a sun, and each sun with a system of worlds; where the Divinity reigns in all the grandeur of His attributes; where He peoples immensity with His wonders, and travels in the greatness of His strength through the dominions of one vast and unlimited monarchy.'

But when the eye fails, and when the telescope fails, he reminds his hearers that *space* does not fail; that immensity stretches forth into

distances where even the most soaring imagination cannot carry us. Again he asks, 'Shall we have the boldness to say, that there is nothing *there?* That the wonders of the Almighty are at an end, because we can no longer trace His footsteps?' Then he displays to us our central sun, apparently moving round some greater centre; he shows us the signs that the whole heavenly hosts are revolving in the same solemn march; and in an ecstasy of wonder and reverence he takes up the burden of his text, 'What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that Thou shouldest deign to visit Him?'

'Though this earth and these heavens were to disappear, there are other worlds which roll afar. The light of other suns shines upon them, and the sky which mantles them is garnished with other stars. . . . And what is this world in the immensity which teems with *them?* And what are they who occupy it? The universe at large would suffer as little in its splendour and variety by the destruction of our planet, as the verdure and sublime magnitude of a forest would suffer by the fall of a single leaf. The leaf

quivers on the branch which supports it. It lies at the mercy of the slightest accident. A breath of wind tears it from its stem, and it lights on the stream of water which passes underneath. In a moment of time the life, which we know by the microscope it teems with, is extinguished; and an occurrence, so insignificant in the eye of man, and on the scale of his observation, carries in it, to the myriads which people this little leaf, an event as terrible and as decisive as the destruction of a world. Now, on the grand scale of the universe, we, the occupiers of this ball, which performs its little round among the suns and the systems that astronomy has unfolded, we may feel the same littleness and the same insecurity.'

'But if this earth of ours be so little and insignificant—a leaf in the forest—a point in space—how is it conceivable,' whispers the Infidelity of the heart, rather than the Infidelity of the tongue and the pen,—'how is it conceivable that the God who rules such an endless dominion would devise, for the puny inhabitants of earth, such a great and wonderful scheme of redemption as the New Testament unfolds?

Would the eternal co-equal Son come down from His throne of infinite majesty, to suffer, to die, to make an atonement for creatures so utterly contemptible, amid the myriad worlds of probably higher beings, that fill every corner of the universe?'

To this floating hypothetical objection he applies himself in the remainder of the Sermons. They are not science proper, or theology proper, but they are sublime reveries of a questioning, contemplative spirit. I do not suppose they ever cured an Infidel; but they have soothed many a Christian mind, and charmed the fancy of men of literature, and of those men who like to brood and speculate on every possible aspect of things.

Seizing upon the contrast brought out between the observations of the telescope and of the microscope, that the infinitude of the small bears as distinct traces of being cared and provided for as the infinitude of the large and the spacious, he breaks out into an apostrophe on the equal love of the Universal Father for all His works, and for the wellbeing of all His creatures.

'It was the telescope that, by piercing the

obscurity which lies between us and distant worlds, put infidelity in possession of the argument against which we are now contending. But about the time of its invention, another instrument was formed, which laid open a scene no less wonderful, and rewarded the inquisitive spirit of man with a discovery which serves to neutralize the whole of this argument. This was the microscope. . . . By the telescope they have discovered that no magnitude, however vast, is beyond the grasp of the Divinity. But by the microscope we have also discovered that no minuteness, however shrunk from the notice of the human eye, is beneath the condescension of His regard. . . . By the one, I am told that the Almighty is now at work in regions more distant than geometry has ever measured, and among worlds more manifold than numbers have ever reached. But by the other I am also told that, with a mind to comprehend the whole in the vast compass of its generality, He has also a mind to concentrate a close and a separate attention on each and on all of its particulars; and that the same God who sends forth an upholding influence among the

orbs and the movements of astronomy, can fill the recesses of every single atom with the intimacy of His presence, and travel, in all the greatness of His unimpaired attributes, upon every one spot and corner of the universe He has formed.

'They, therefore, who think that God will not put forth such a power, and such a goodness, and such a condescension in behalf of this world, as are ascribed to Him in the New Testament, because He has so many other worlds to attend to, think of Him as a man. . . . They only find room in their minds for His one attribute of a large and general superintendence, and keep out of their remembrance the equally impressive proofs we have for His other attribute, of a minute and multiplied attention to all that diversity of operations, where it is He that worketh all in all.'

His Thursday rotation services occupied him all through 1816; and in the beginning of 1817, the *Astronomical Sermons* were published. The success was as unexpected as it was unprecedented. Nobody could be more amazed than himself and his publisher. Instead of a fair

Glasgow sale, on which they had counted, the work was flying on the wings of the wind to every part of Scotland and of England. It came out side by side with the *Tales of my Landlord*, and side by side it kept—a volume of Sermons running neck-to-neck with one of the magical Waverley Novels! It passed through nine editions in one year, and 20,000 volumes were in circulation; they were the *rage* of the season. 'These sermons,' says Hazlitt, 'ran like wildfire through the country; were the darlings of' watering-places, were laid in the windows of inns, and were to be met with in all places of public resort.' Hazlitt himself was bewitched. 'We remember finding the volume,' he continues, 'in the orchard of the inn at Burford Bridge, near Boxhill, and passing a whole and very delightful morning in reading it without quitting the shade of an apple-tree.' The wits of London, for a moment, had a sensation from the Norlan Calvinist. Sir James Mackintosh, in the midst of his 'little boxes of knowledge,' which some contemporary wag has described, condescended to sip this new theological elixir; and George Canning, the bright,

the flashing—himself by this time the Orpheus of St. Stephens—came under the spell. These Sermons, there can be no doubt, won for Chalmers that fraternization from the literary world which is so seldom accorded to theologians, and lifted him up at once to the platform of British, and even European fame.

XI.

THE GREAT PULPIT ORATOR.

WE have already noted the singular and rare combination of his mental endowments,—an intellect peculiarly formed for the pursuits and methods of positive science, combined with a temperament of the most blazing intensity, both from bodily constitution and from the impulses of feeling and disposition. There were thus blended in him the elements, usually existing apart, of the physicist, the orator, and the man of action.

When the current of his life bore him away from mathematics and natural philosophy into the region of morality, of theology, of Christian sociology, his intensity had all the larger scope; but how were his scientific habitudes to be brought into accord with this new and

more excursive sphere of operation? It was in this way. He considered that the methods of science—in other words, the rules of the Baconian philosophy—were no less applicable to his new studies of ethics, theology, and Christian polity, than to his old studies of astronomy, chemistry, and mechanics. Could he not make something like the same exact and exhaustive *inductions*,—in ethics, from the consciousness, and actions, and history of man; in theology, from the revealed facts of Scripture; in Christian polity, from the seen and tried adaptations of the practical truths of Christianity to the spiritual necessities of individuals and of commonwealths? and from these inductions could he not collect and arrange his *deductions*,—his general conclusions, his reservoirs of universal truth,—which he could then open up, and discharge in full streams for the instruction and salvation of mankind?

Hence, in all his writings (his sermons amongst the rest) there has been first of all an induction—a strict interrogation as to the facts falling under the particular subject to

which his mind has been directed. By this induction he arrives at his general principles. He lays down his proposition; and then passing from analysis to synthesis, he demonstrates this proposition, *more mathematico*, by a continuous chain of solution. Having established his proposition, he commonly applies the lesson derived from it, by way of corollary, to the various specific cases with which he may be concerned. This is the characteristic form of his writings. They are never what we call *essays*,—miscellaneous remarks, a string of 'happy thoughts;' they are always set and serious *demonstrations*.

We do not undertake, of course, to say that he always *does* demonstrate his propositions; we are not concerned at present with the soundness or unsoundness, the strength or weakness of his proofs: we only say, that the form of his reasoning is usually cast in the mathematical mould, — that is, he does not cumulate a number of arguments, meant by their aggregate weight to support the proposition; but he seeks out until he finds what he regards to be the *one decisive solution*, and

that *one* solution he draws out link by link, with untiring continuity, and as untiring reiteration. Neither do we mean to say that, although taking to a mathematical form, he affects to put religious and moral and political propositions on the same strict footing of evidence as mathematical propositions. He was thoroughly aware, with Burke, that 'the lines of morality are not like the ideal lines of mathematics. They are broad and deep, as well as long. They admit of exceptions; they demand modifications. These exceptions and modifications are not made by the process of logic, but by the rules of prudence.' Chalmers liked to be girt up in the compact *forms* of mathematical reasoning; but still, within these forms, he made all the allowances, he took into account all 'the exceptions and modifications' of which Burke gives warning. No one familiar either with his sermons or his economic writings (for instance, his *Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns*), will withhold from him the merit of comprehensive consideration—of that 'prudence' on which Burke lays so much stress, in attempting to

solve the complex and practical questions of religion, morality, and politics.

His sermons, as we have said, are marked by the same general characteristics as his other writings.

First of all, he takes a wide compass of subjects; his circumference is very much the universe; he shakes himself free from all narrow, anti-natural orthodoxy. Where being is, God is; where action can reach, Christianity should penetrate. He was amongst the first who beat all the old traditional dust out of the pulpit. He ranged at large without restriction, from the discoveries of science, through the mysteries of redemption, into the dealings of commerce, the small moralities of life, the details of parish management, the real wants of the poor, the sufferings of the lower animals. The motto round his pulpit was, 'The field is the world!' Such being the breadth and abundance of his subjects, let us descend and examine how he treated them.

He chooses some definite theme. He seldom indulges in any exordium, or the exordium is a statement of some axioms or postulates

that are to be previously granted. But he generally at once enunciates his proposition. If any definitions or explanations are required, he then gives them, and forthwith he enters upon his demonstration. Or there may sometimes be two or three concurrent lines of demonstration, and these he successively takes up and carries out to their several conclusions. Whatever illustrations he uses, whatever digressions he makes, are not for their own sakes, or interruptions to the train of thought, but, on the contrary, are meant to swell the main current, and to mark more distinctly where and whither it is flowing. His very figures of speech, his similes and metaphors, his touches of description, his historic allusions, his bubblings-up of genuine poetic sentiment, are not thrown in for external effect,—are not exuberances of unpruned fancy, as with such teeming writers as Jeremy Taylor and Sir Thomas Browne; but are part of the tissue which he is weaving, and cannot without violence be separated from their adjuncts. He has no pet passages, such as are common amongst our eloquent writers. His most glowing illustra-

tions are part of his proof; his highest bursts of eloquence are just a triumphant way of saying Q. E. D.!

This close adherence to the demonstrative form—this tenacity to his one point until it was made fast on the mind—has been matter of objection to him, as if he had been a man of few ideas, and deficient in onwardness and versatility. Robert Hall—I always think with an under-current of jealousy, of which, probably, he was unconscious—is reported to have said, 'that the mind of Chalmers moved upon hinges, not upon wheels.' As true as smart! But Hall, whose mind was so differently constituted, did not perceive the reason why. Hall, from the nature of his malady, as well as the nature of his talents, was a man of contemplation and discussion, a lover of ever-varying thought. Chalmers—strong, indefatigable, governing—was above all things a man of action; a lover of practical results in the conduct of man and the condition of society. The desire of Hall was, to present men with a revolving panorama of views; the desire of Chalmers, to fix men round a centre of influence. The wheel turns forward

the panorama — that suited Hall; the hinge holds fast outer objects to a centre—that suited Chalmers. Instead of an objection, it was his mission: he was born to move upon hinges.

With all respect for the memory of Hall, it might have been better if he had had more of the hinge and less of the wheel. Even his friendly critic Foster makes it the chief complaint against his writings, that they want concentration; that they are often slightly connected, and loosely held together. The wheel too often ran away with him: he rolled on and on, without a central purpose. Chalmers was all the more useful and effective, if a little tedious at times, that he held men fast by his hinge.

The effect of his strong mathematic turn of mind, suffused as it was with such intensity of conception and emotion, was, that his subjects all became as it were palpable realities; he thought and felt and spoke, not as an abstract essayist, but as a man standing in the midst of a moving and living world. He quotes somewhere with approbation a saying of Professor Robison, that the reason why he preferred geometry to algebra was, that in the former

you work with the *ipsa corpora*—lines and angles and surfaces; whereas in the latter the *ipsa corpora* vanish, and you work only with dead numerals and symbols. Chalmers had the same preference for the *ipsa corpora*. Everything starts around him into motion and life, and breathes joy and love, or menaces destruction. Hence his great figure is *personification;* and his demonstrations quicken at last into dramatic poems. Look—as the first instance which happens to occur to me—to his Astronomical sermon on the 'Contest for ascendency over man among the higher intelligences.' Look at the passages where he describes—that is, where he *sees*—this world as 'the actual theatre of a keen and ambitious contest amongst the upper orders of creation.' It is the same in all his writings, even his little pamphlets, or short letters. His subjects are not cold propositions to be quietly argued about; they come to us with the eyes and breath of living things; they are ministers of grace to be welcomed to our heart; or demons spreading sin and misery, whom we must resist for very life, and cry unto the great God to deliver us from their fury.

On the habit which he purposely adopted —of preaching only from manuscript, in fact of *reading* his sermons—we have already commented, and explained his reasons for preferring this method. It might be supposed, amongst other effects, that this would take away the whole force and edge from his compositions. Some of our greatest preachers—Bossuet, Hall, Schleiermacher — have suffered from the inverse method, that of preaching extempore, and endeavouring afterwards from memory to write out the delivered sermon for publication. In all such cases the unanimous verdict of their hearers has been, that in the re-distillation the finer spirit has evaporated; however excellent as books, they lost the fire of the living sermons. Chalmers, from his peculiarities, escaped the disadvantages which might well have been anticipated from his not being able to preach extempore, and preaching only from his manuscript. From the intensity of his character, and the warm human feeling which constantly possessed him, it is known that he composed, not his sermons only, but his other writings which were not intended for oral de-

livery, with the sense of an assemblage of people always before him; that even when writing in private, he throbbed, and glowed, and inly thundered to his imagined auditory. '*Non est magnus orator*,' says Cicero, who knew so well every chord in the oratorical bosom—'*non est magnus orator sine multitudine audiente*.' Chalmers, even in his preparations, had always the listening multitude—had always that stimulus of the great orator, even in the privacy of the closet, and in the silence and solitariness of midnight study. He wrote everything to be spoken; he wrote everything as if he were speaking it, at least in feeling, if not in actual sounds; he wrote everything with an audience glaring in his face. Hence his sermons have all the advantage, all the verve and palpitation of a direct extempore address. They have none of the chilliness of discourses written before, nor the lukewarmness of discourses served up after the delivery; from the peculiarity of which we have spoken, they have all the pith of preparation, and all the quick leap of impromptu. He also, although a slow thinker, was a rapid composer—dashed off his writings at full gallop,

often by snatches of ten minutes or half an hour, as he was visiting or journeying; hence they have still more the bounding liveliness of improvisation. He might be diffuse, careless, clumsy—might tear along at times to the very verge of declamation; but he could never be tame or dreary. His sermons were always the voice of a real man to real men.

On his style—the mode in which he brings out and expresses his thoughts—we shall say little.

There are three things that make up a good style,—perspicuity, propriety, harmony; that a man clearly express what he really means; that his words be pure idiom, and fitting to the sense; that the collocation of the words in the sentences fall easily and pleasingly on the ear. The first—perspicuity—is alone indispensable. The second and third—propriety and harmony—are not indispensable, for the sense may be conveyed without them; but without them, a man can never take rank as a classical author. Style is something like dress. To be good, it is indispensable that there be a good texture of cloth, which is like perspicuity.

Next, though not indispensable, the dress should fit well into the shoulders and body. Last, though again not indispensable, the whole outline of the dress should be shapely, and hang all of a piece upon the man. But suppose the stuff good, then for the rest, the fitting will be according to the size and shape of the man; and so also different outlines will look handsome and comely on different persons. A writer must be perspicuous, or his style is not style at all, merely the gabble of a barbarian; but propriety and harmony will be much according to the genius, the passions, the temperaments of the different writers, and the lower or higher altitude of their subjects; they can never be adjusted by square and rule.

Chalmers had, in fact, two styles. The one was for himself, when merely making his thoughts visible to his own eye, as in his Journals and the *Horæ Sabbaticæ*. It was simple, quiet, terse, yet marked and impressive. It was also the style, I am told, usual with him in conversation. The other was for great public audiences, when he would have mixed multitudes before him—masses of his fellow-men whom he must use

every various method to enlighten, persuade, subdue, new-mould. Apart from the writings merely for his own use and solace, he never wrote, as we have just mentioned, without having in his mind the presence of a great listening, heaving crowd. He wrote in his closet as if thousands were hanging upon his every word; his pen therefore learned to *oratorize*. This, his public style, was not wanting in simplicity; but had a tendency to be diffuse, to be over-loaded, to have a bigness of sound beyond the magnitude of the sense, to have some poetic flourishes in the diction when there was little poetry in the thought. These were faults incident to his always writing as for a great mixed multitude, with a torturing anxiety to be understood by them, and to produce an effect upon them; and also from the headlong rapidity of his mode of composition. He possesses at least the first quality of style—perspicuity. I do not think there is a sentence in all his thirty or forty volumes about which there can be any doubt from obscurity in the style. His propriety is not so unimpeachable; his words are often pedantic, often forced and quaint, some-

times vulgar to a purist, and sometimes high and swelling when the meaning is sufficiently commonplace. In harmony he is by no means deficient. He has not the fine inner-winding music that ripples through the pages of a Jeremy Taylor or a Coleridge; but there is a rolling and a tumbling in his sentences which carries you successfully through them, and they generally finish up into a good round period. The fact is, he was no dainty finical man; he was broad, earnest, eager, impassioned. As the man, so the style; not a fine clarified liquid, but a fermentation of genius and goodness!

It is unfortunate for his reputation that he published such a multitude of Sermons. Two-thirds of them are repetitions, down even to phrases and paragraphs. Very many have nothing remarkable about them but the religious earnestness of the man. They were composed too, as we say, to be spoken from the pulpit, not to be read in one's quiet closet. The only way to do them justice now, is not to read them 'into ourselves,' as the phrase is, but for some good and vigorous reader to reproduce

them before a company,—a test which can seldom be applied. Yet there might be some *twenty* selected from the mass, which would bear comparison, in real thought, talent, and impressiveness, with the highest masters of the sacred art, and justify the title we have bestowed upon him—the great pulpit orator of his age.

But howsoever we may estimate his sermons as expositions of thought, or as pieces of literary composition, there can be no question about their overpowering *effect* as orations. And this applied in the same measure to his speeches on any particular occasion, and even to his writings when he sought to interest the public in any particular cause or opinion. The effects which he produced had also this singularity,—rare with even the most eloquent preachers, and only exemplified in the case of the highest grade of statesmen-orators—such men as Demosthenes and Pitt, and sometimes Brougham,—that the effects were not momentary excitements, the charm of the pleasant instrument forgotten ere morning; but were *permanent*, haunting, and influencing: they af-

fected the actions of men, and moulded their lives. Few men left Chalmers as they came; he did not touch their nerves simply, he touched their hearts. If it was a secular movement, he enlisted them on his side: 'What can I do to help forward this cause?' If it was religion, he awakened them to serious concern: 'What must I do to be saved?' Of the order, as we say, of the highest statesmen-orators, his speeches were not a flourish, but a policy; his sermons were generally an epoch in the spiritual life of some one or more of his hearers.

'I know not what it is,' said the most exacting critic of our age, himself a trained and ingenious speaker, Lord Jeffrey, after hearing Chalmers in the General Assembly of 1816, 'but there is something altogether remarkable about that man! It reminds me more of what one reads of as the effect of the eloquence of Demosthenes, than anything I ever heard.' When in London in 1817: 'All the world wild about Dr. Chalmers,' writes Wilberforce in his Diary. . . . 'Off early with Canning, Huskisson, and Lord Binning. . . . Vast crowds. . . . I was surprised to see how greatly Canning was

affected; at times he was quite melted into tears.' The then Countess of Elgin mentions the same incident in a letter: 'Mr. Canning was present at the sermon preached for the Hibernian Society. The beautiful passage on the Irish character affected him to tears.' 'The *tartan* beats us all!' exclaimed that lofty orator as he left the church, all the more appreciating and generous because he was himself a lofty orator. Chalmers' friend and publisher, Mr. Smith of Glasgow, who accompanied him, writes after the delivery of his Missionary Sermon in old Rowland Hill's, in this same 1817: 'All my expectations were overwhelmed in the triumph of it. Nothing from the Tron pulpit ever exceeded it, nor did he ever more arrest and wonderwork his auditors. I had a full view of the whole place. The carrying forward of minds never was so visible to me; a constant assent of the head from the whole people accompanied all his paragraphs; and the breathlessness of expectation permitted not the beating of a heart to agitate the stillness.' One of his auditors on this occasion was good, warm-hearted Daniel Wilson, afterwards Bishop of Calcutta. Meet-

ing Dr. Duff, the Scottish apostle to India, immediately after the tidings of the death of Chalmers had arrived at Calcutta: 'Ah!' said he, 'sad news, sad news, not only for the Church of Scotland, but for Christendom. Ah,' he added, 'he once made me a Dissenter. I went to Rowland Hill's to hear his missionary sermon; and though thirty years since, the thrill of it remains *here*'—pressing his hand upon his heart —'till this day.'

His Biographer has collected numerous instances to exemplify the amazing effects of his oratory. We shall present a few of them, as giving a more forcible illustration than any general description or eulogium.

The first is an account given by Dr. Wardlaw of the delivery of the Astronomical Sermons in Glasgow in 1815-16. Dr. Wardlaw, Independent minister in Glasgow, was himself a man of distinguished ability, ripe scholarship, and grave and impressive eloquence, of which many memorials remain, and are highly prized.

'The Tron Church contains, if I mistake not, about 1400 hearers, according to the ordinary allowance of seat-room; when crowded,

of course proportionally more. . . . To see a place of worship of the size mentioned crammed above and below on a Thursday forenoon, during the busiest hours of the day, with fifteen or sixteen hundred hearers, and these of all descriptions of persons, in all descriptions of professional occupations,—the busiest, as well as those who had most leisure on their hands,—those who had least to spare taking care so to arrange their business engagements previously as to make time for the purpose,—all pouring in through the wide entrance at the side of the Tron steeple half-an-hour before the time of service, to secure a seat, or content, if too late for this, to occupy, as many did, standing-room,—this was indeed a novel and strange sight. Nor was it once merely or twice, but month after month; the day was calculated when his turn to preach again was to come round, and anticipated with even impatient longing by multitudes.

'Suppose the congregation thus assembled—pews filled with sitters, and aisles to a great extent with standers. They wait in eager expectation. The preacher appears. . . . There

is a hush of dead silence. The text is announced, and he begins. Every countenance is up—every eye bent with fixed intentness on the speaker. As he kindles the interest grows. Every breath is held, every cough is suppressed, every fidgety movement is settled; every one, riveted himself by the spell of the impassioned and entrancing eloquence, knows how sensitively his neighbour will resent the very slightest disturbance. Then, by and by, there is a pause. The speaker stops,—to gather breath, to wipe his forehead, to adjust his gown,—and purposely too, and wisely, to give the audience as well as himself a moment or two of relaxation. The moment is embraced. There is free breathing; suppressed coughs get vent; postures are changed; there is a universal stir as of persons who could not have endured the constraint much longer. The preacher bends forward—his hand is raised—all is again hushed. The same stillness and strain of unrelaxed attention is repeated,—more intent still, it may be, than before, as the interest of the subject and of the speaker advances; and so, for perhaps four or five times in the course of a sermon, there is

the relaxation, and the *at it again*, till the final winding-up.'

Chalmers was specially invited to preach before the Lord High Commissioner at the General Assembly of 1816. He preached a condensation of the three first of his Astronomical Sermons.

'The attention of the auditory,' states an eye-witness, 'was so upon the stretch, that when the preacher made a pause at the conclusion of an argument, a sort of sigh, as if for breath, was perceptible through the house.' And, after quoting a magnificent passage (the last of the two which we have previously quoted from his Astronomical Sermons), another witness present thus describes the scene:—'At the end of this passage, there ran through the congregation a suppressed but perfectly audible murmur of applause — an occurrence unprecedented in the course of the delivery of a sermon, but irresistible in order to relieve our highly-excited feelings.'

We next take perhaps the most remarkable instance of all—when, by request of the grandees of England, he delivered his course of

lectures on Church Establishments in London, in spring 1838. He was now verging on sixty, but, as we shall see, neither had his natural force abated, nor his sovereignty over men, even men the greatest and most refined and enlightened. It was, perhaps, the zenith of his oratorical triumphs,—and he all the time so calm and lowly! His great soul was fixed only upon his cause,—scarcely even feeling one breath of that human applause which was rolling around him,—which he always valued so little,—of which no man knew better than he the variability and the vanity.

Hear the minute and picturesque account of Dr. Begg, who was at his side during the mission:—

'Nothing could exceed the enthusiasm which prevailed in London. The great city seemed stirred to its very depths. The Doctor sat when delivering his lectures behind a small table, the hall in front being densely crowded with one of the most brilliant audiences that ever assembled in Britain. It was supposed that at least five hundred of those present were peers and members of the House of Com-

mons. Sir James Graham was a very constant attender. The sitting attitude of Dr. Chalmers seemed at first irreconcilable with much energy or effect. But such an anticipation was at once dispelled by the enthusiasm of the speaker, responded to, if possible, by the still more intense enthusiasm of the audience; and occasionally the effect was even greatly increased by the eloquent man springing unconsciously to his feet, and delivering with overwhelming power the more magnificent passages,—a movement which, on one occasion at least, was imitated by the entire audience, when the words, "The king cannot, the king dare not," were uttered in accents of prophetic vehemence, that must still ring in the ears of all who heard them, and were responded to by a whirlwind of enthusiasm which was probably never exceeded in the history of eloquence. . . . Nothing was more striking, however, amidst all this excitement, than the childlike humility of the great man himself. All the flattery seemed to produce no effect whatever on him; his mind was entirely absorbed in his great object; and the same kind, playful, and

truly Christian spirit that so endeared him to us all, was everywhere apparent in his conduct.'

James Grant — long-practised observer of public men and events in London—has, in his *Memoirs of Sir George Sinclair*, added some quaint little touches to fill up the corners of this picture. It brings to one's mind all the well-remembered awkward tricks of the great orator, his impetuosity and unconscious carelessness; which, however, never made him ridiculous, but rather served to enhance the originality and impressiveness and unsophisticated charm that was about the man.

'The Bishop of Exeter, and Dr. Blomfield, the then Bishop of London, both attended these lectures, and listened to them, as I can state from personal observation, with the most profound attention, and, if any faith is to be placed in Lavater's theory of physiognomy, with the greatest delight.

'But, apart from the matter of these lectures of Dr. Chalmers, there was something in the Doctor's appearance and delivery which, to a London audience, for the most part very intel-

lectual, and of high social position, must have seemed very strange. His great massive head, his broad forehead, and white neck-tie thrown carelessly around his neck, and as crumpled as if he had slept in it, were things which in combination formed quite a study. Then there was the broad Scotch accent, the broadest I ever heard, falling all the more strangely on the English ear because of the animation, the earnestness, and the energy with which he spoke; while, to add to the uniqueness of the scene, there was the curious sight of his spectacles falling off his nose with unfailing punctuality, when he came to the concluding word in any of the more magnificent bursts of eloquence with which his lectures so largely abounded. Mr. Sinclair was present in the Hanover Square Rooms, as were many bishops, peers, members of the House of Commons, and other distinguished persons, while Dr. Chalmers' lectures were in course of delivery.'

Although, as we have said, he could never become ridiculous, yet there were always little *outré* incidents happening, from the tumultuous vehemence of his manner, which those who wit-

nessed them would remember and repeat with infinite gusto. I think it is Mr. Masson who relates, that on some great field-day in the General Assembly, when he was pressing his views with even more than the usual amount of fine frenzy, an obtuse member, who could not distinguish enthusiasm from a fit of rage, rose and proposed to adjourn the debate, 'because,' he said, 'the reverend gentleman was in such an excited state that it would be impossible for them to carry on the discussion with the necessary calmness.' Chalmers, thus suddenly brought up in the midst of his bounding career, cried out, almost choking with indignation, '*Exceeted*, sir! —*exceeted!* I am as cool, sir, as an algebraic problem.' And so he was. The vehemence was mere matter of temperament and expression: it was simply his style of demonstration. In the midst of this outer-whirling tempest, he

> 'Dilated stood,
> Like Teneriffe or Atlas unremoved:'

his great passions seven times heated, but his intellect remaining all the while perfectly clear and undisturbed. It has often been seen, when he was suddenly stopped in the course of his

apparent *furies*, that there was not a particle of either nervous agitation or mental commotion; he was at once as collected as the merest proser, —in fact, 'as cool as an algebraic problem.'

And now for a stranger scene, if not a more brilliant. In the summer of the same 1838, he made a journey to Paris, personally to acknowledge the honour lately conferred upon him, of being elected Corresponding Member of the Institute. Whilst in Paris, he preached in one of the Protestant chapels; and, in the following account, the pastor bears testimony that his laurels did not wither in the city of Bossuet and Massillon and Lacordaire.

'I cannot recall either the year, or the month, or the Sunday when I had the privilege of seeing Dr. Chalmers occupy my pulpit in the chapel Taitbout; but that which I have never forgot, nor ever will forget all my life, is that I have seen and heard him preach. The impressions which he made upon me, and upon the multitudes who thronged to hear him, are of the kind which are never effaced.

'It was at the period when he came to Paris to be, I think, received as a member of the

Institute of France. My chapel was then situated in the street of which it has taken and kept the name. . . . It was capable of containing from 700 to 800 persons. . . . Although ordinarily well filled, the chapel never was so crowded. It was literally choke full; and that compact multitude was composed in great part of persons strangers to our worship. There were few, indeed, of the members of the Institute, and of the different learned bodies of Paris who were not present, all attracted by the consummate interest inspired in them by the science and reputation of the Doctor. The places became so few that, feeling it my duty in courtesy to give up the two or three seats which I occupied, one after another, I was reduced at last to take my seat on one of the steps of the stair leading up to my pulpit; and it was from thence that I could at once see the aspect of the assembly, appreciate the profound attention which it yielded to the Doctor, hear him myself, and follow all his movements.

'There was nothing in the commencement which particularly struck me. I would even

say that his attitude, his vacant look, and the monotonous tone of his voice, during the offering up of the prayer which preceded his sermon, were very far from revealing to me the man he was. But in a short time the great preacher unveiled himself; and I was not slow, with the whole audience, to be seized with admiration, and more and more mastered, by the power of his language and of his oratorical action.

'He took his text in the First of John iv. 8, "God is love." His discourse was written. During some time he had before him his manuscript, which he held fast with the left hand, and followed each line with the finger of the right. But this reading, which he knew how to render as attractive as impressive, was frequently interrupted to give place to the extemporary suggestion or exposition of new points of view of the subject not treated in the written discourse; and the language which his emotion furnished then to the Doctor was energetic, finely-shaded, clear, and harmonious—that of true eloquence. I seem yet to myself to see him, with his manuscript grasped in his hand, the body bending forward a little over the

pulpit, and seizing hold of all his auditors, addressing to them appeals the most direct, and the most fitted to reach them, even to the depths of their conscience. His words, springing evidently from his convictions, and from the overflowings of his heart, were the faithful expression of them, and had something of the rapidity and of the force of the torrent as it dashes from the mountain, and bears everything along in its passage. The action of the Doctor appeared to me no less remarkable than his language. 'His whole being seemed to me to rush into his preaching.'

These are a few specimens, out of the numberless instances which might be given, of the unique and astounding *effect* of his oratory. For parallels one must go to the ancient times of Demosthenes, or to the Middle Ages with its St. Bernard. The man, whose voice thus subjugated his fellow-men for more than thirty years—who was followed at sixty-seven as at thirty-seven—who, with so much that was outwardly uncouth and odd, hushed the frivolity of London once and again, and melted the souls of the French philosophers in a half-known tongue

—who was hailed with audible applause in a sermon before the Royal Commissioner, and made princes of the blood and senators and bishops start to their feet, and break into rounds of wildest acclamation—who fixed Hazlitt under the apple-tree for a day, and drew compliments from Mackintosh, and the tears of childhood from Canning,—this man may fairly be crowned, in our intellectual capital, as the greatest pulpit orator of his age.

XII.

HOW TO ORGANIZE LARGE CITIES.

BUT though zealous and constant preaching was the main instrument of his Christian embassy, yet he came not to Glasgow merely to be a preacher, least of all to be the popular preacher, on whose lips the sensational mobs would hang like a cluster of bees. He came not that he might merely announce from the pulpit every Sunday the message of divine reconciliation, and then disappear from the view, and indulge in his own pleasures, or immure himself in his study for the rest of the week. He came to be a *parish minister* in Glasgow, as he had been in Kilmany.

The first survey of Glasgow confounded him. 'It is not easy for me to describe my general

feeling in reference to the population with which I have more immediately to do. I feel as if it were a mighty and impenetrable mass, truly beyond the strength of one individual arm, and before which, after a few furtive and unavailing exertions, nothing remains but to sit down in the idleness of despair. It is a number, it is a magnitude, it is an endless succession of houses and families, it is an extent of field, which puts at a distance all hope of a deep or universal impression.'

Instead of a parish with its six or seven hundred souls, like Kilmany, the Tron contained a population of 12,000, generally of the poorest classes of the people.

There was the church of the parish rising in the midst, it is true, but totally inadequate for the population; and this church, instead of being occupied only or chiefly by the parishioners, by the multitudes of the circumjacent poor, was largely filled by persons coming from all quarters, by the rich and educated, who were attracted by the eloquence of him who regarded himself in that pulpit as solely the minister of the Tron parishioners. The letting of the seats

being in the hands of the Town Council, and being a source of revenue, was farmed for the utmost profit that could be extracted; the charges were too high for the means of the poor; and the mass of the population consequently, however much inclined, were denied access to their own sanctuary.

Glasgow, like the other large towns, had, in its rapid and vast extension, lost hold of the system of parochial schools,—of a national school for every church and parish. It had no parochial schools proper, but only various kinds of voluntary schools—from rich foundations down to miserable little gatherings in back rooms and garrets. Hence great multitudes of the children of the poor were untaught, or ill-taught—either sunk in, or verging upon, a state of barbarism, in the midst of the surrounding boasted civilisation.

Again, in the administration of the relief for paupers, Glasgow, like many other of the large towns, and many even of the rural parishes in the more southern parts of Scotland, infected by the contiguous example of England, had departed from the old Scottish method of

relief, derived mainly from the church-door collections, placed under the management of the session of the particular parish. The church-door collections were still nominally kept up, but were supplemented, or rather were almost entirely superseded, by a compulsory assessment upon the property of the parish. I say almost entirely superseded, for compulsory assessment always tends to dry up voluntary contribution. The church-door collections, again, were not left in the disposal of the particular session, but were all remitted to a common fund, under the control of a general session, composed of all the ministers and elders of the city. The compulsory assessments, on the other hand, were committed to the management of a corporate body called the Town Hospital. The processes of this administration, as might well be supposed from such a number of wheels within wheels, were cumbrous, injudicious, and wasteful, productive only of ever-increasing pauperism, fertile only in misery—unblessing and unblest.

Chalmers' whole theory of a parish was here contradicted and reversed. His theory was—

the parish domain limited so as to contain, at most, only about 400 families, or 2000 persons; the parish church filled by the parish people; and each of the inhabitants, from the oldest to the youngest, the personal acquaintance of the minister and office-bearers, the personal object of their interest and solicitude; each parish to have its publicly endowed school, the education not gratuitous, but at such charges that the poorest might not be deterred; and the authorities of the parish, with the collections of their own church in their own hands, to take the whole burden of the poor of their own parish, to see efficiently after all their necessities; and to direct the whole of this administration with a view to raise the poor above the stigma and defilement of compulsory relief altogether.

Chalmers was not the man to 'sit down in the idleness of despair.' He speedily got rid of his first feeling of amazement and helplessness. Method, diligence, and sustained energy enabled him to manage, and manage most effectively, what, at the first sight, seemed utterly beyond his power.

His *eight years* in Glasgow—first in the Tron,

and afterwards in St. John's—would fill a goodly volume; and it must be admitted that the interest, the wonder, the instruction, lie chiefly in the details, and are greatly lost when given in mere generalities. The originality and merit of the many plans which made up his parochial system—that is, in other words, his system for the religious and moral management of communities—do not come out so much in startling general theories, as in wise, simple, efficacious methods of working. Hence it is, if we wish to learn the lessons of his Glasgow experience, we must go to the study of the details, as we have them narrated, for instance, in the twenty-first volume of his collected works, on the *Parochial System*. Mere general descriptions, however accurate or graphic, will fail to convey any adequate representation. He was, as we have already called him, a Moral Engineer; and if we wish to derive instruction from his plans —anything beyond a moment's entertainment— we must not simply gaze at his more conspicuous towers and ramparts, but we must examine to the minutiæ, his whole lines of attack or defence.

It is impossible for me within my present limits to give any such minute account. I can only offer a few generalities; and the only use of these again will be, to bring out a mere tracing of the main points, which he always considered that his Glasgow experience had established.

I pass over altogether his operations in the Tron, where it was impossible for him to realize his parochial ideals, and confine myself to St. John's, which he entered in 1820. The magistrates conferred upon him, in that new parish, greater, though not sufficient facilities, for working out his experiments. Many of them were actuated by sympathy in his designs, but some of them, it is said, with a quiet malice, wished to give him scope for ridiculous failure, and free the bailies of Glasgow, who could fine and imprison the poor wretches but could not improve them, from the oratorical clamour of this ecclesiastical busybody.

I pass over his strictly pastoral duties, such as visitations, and the institution of elders and deacons. I must also pass without notice, though most unwillingly, his judicious and un-

wearied exertions for education, in which he was a pioneer, like Lancaster and Brougham, against the squirearchy, and the ruling factions, and the privileged clergy. I can do no more than mention, in passing, that it was from the example of his Sabbath schools in the Tron—of the peculiar attractiveness there was in having a distinctly *local school*, as a school for one lane, one side of a street, and so on—that he discovered the importance of *local institutions* in the work of reclaiming men from barbarism and irreligion,—the importance of breaking up the impermeable mass of home heathenism, and then employing, upon each separate little locality, every Christianizing and civilising agency. This was the *eureka* in all his future warfare against town heathenism. It was ever afterwards by this charm of LOCALISM that he sought to win back the outcast population of large towns to humanity, decency, and intelligence, and to the still higher influences of religion. In short, he would master the 'mighty and impenetrable mass' of Glasgow, by subdividing it into so many *little Kilmanics*. 'Let,' he exclaims in the

visions of his Christian philanthropy,—'Let next-door neighbours be supplied with one common object of reverence and regard in the clergyman who treats them alike as members of the same parochial family; let his church be the place of common repair upon the Sabbaths; let his sermon, which told the same things to all, suggest the common topics on which the similarly impressed might enter into conversations, that begin and strengthen more and more the friendship between them; let the intimacies of the parish children be formed and ripened together at the same school;—these all help as cementing influences, by which to bind this aggregate of human beings into one community; and, with a speed and certainty now by many inconceivable, to set up a village or domestic economy even in the heart of a crowded metropolis.'

But his most remarkable experiment in Glasgow was that directed to the diminution, indeed to the extinction of *pauperism*—stretching out, as this experiment did, into all the social questions bearing upon the condition and prospects of the poor, and of the working class.

This experiment again, for any useful application of it, must be studied in all the working details; but the mere general routine of the process was quite simple and intelligible.

By the old Scotch law, as modified by universal practice, relief was allowed to the impotent or disabled poor, not to the able-bodied or those capable of work. The administration of relief was vested in the kirk-sessions in rural parishes, and in the magistrates in burghs. The funds for relief were, the voluntary collections made at the church-doors, or, in case of necesity, there was power to levy an assessment on the property of the parish.

Without discussing what may be the exact difference between the poor-law in England and in Scotland as originally framed, the mode of management and the habits of the people created a difference that was in fact diametrically opposite. Whereas the poor in England, even the able-bodied, believed they had a right to legal compulsory relief, the poor in Scotland, even the impotent as well as the able-bodied, had no notion of any right; they felt that their real dependence was upon themselves

and their relatives; or if the community should aid them, it was only by the church-door collections, or other voluntary benefactions. In consequence, although there could be recourse upon assessment under the old Scotch Acts, there were very few parishes that had adopted the method of assessment prior to 1760. The usual account given is, that there were only three instances of assessment prior to 1700; from 1700 to 1800, ninety-three in all; and from 1800 to 1817 (about the time Chalmers came to Glasgow), forty-nine new cases; that is, about 150 cases of assessment altogether, out of the whole 1000 parishes of Scotland. The Poor-Law Report of 1843 declares, that 'a strong feeling in opposition to a legal assessment has . . . existed in Scotland. . . . It is maintained that the existence of an assessment in a parish has a tendency to encourage pauperism, and to increase the number of the poor, without materially bettering their condition.' It was seldom that the poor could lay by a sufficient store to maintain themselves in old age, or in case of confirmed illness or infirmity; but it was found, by almost unfailing experience, that in such

cases they were cheerfully taken care of by their children, or by near relatives, or by the liberality of some old master, or of kind neighbours. It was always with extreme reluctance they fell back upon 'the parish;' their children or kinsfolk would have felt this a stain upon the family name; or, if they sat by and allowed it, they would have incurred the scorn of the whole neighbourhood. Thus it was that, up to about fifty years ago (and much later in most places), the Scottish people grew up in an abhorrence of pauperism; and the fixed national sentiment was, that the poor, sinking into indigence, should be supported by their relatives; or, if these failed, then by the hand of spontaneous benevolence.

This in general was the method of poor management and poor relief for which Chalmers contended. It was no novelty which he sought to introduce; the novelty was that which he determinedly opposed—even that of foisting in a universal compulsory assessment, and corrupting the poor with the belief that they had a legal right to demand support from the parish. He stood by the old ways. His origi-

nality did not lie in inventing any new or untried method, but in strengthening the old Scottish method, by explaining its *philosophy*,—by showing how it was founded on the clearest moral and economic principles,—and further, by giving it a permanent organization, and connecting it with his *localism*, so that no poor man should ever be lost in the crowd, but, in his circumscribed locality, should have all the blessings of neighbourly regard and assistance—of education, religion, and, where need was, of charity.

Chalmers divided his St. John's parish of 10,000 inhabitants—2000 families—into twenty-five districts, called *proportions*, each embracing from 60 to 100 families, or a maximum of 500 individuals—about the number of his whole parishioners in Kilmany. He appointed a deacon, generally a resident, to attend to the temporal concerns of each proportion. Any one claiming relief applied to his deacon. The deacon made a rigorous inquiry into the case; and, from his local knowledge, he had great advantages in the inquiry. If the claim was an imposition, or undeserving, it was, of course,

dismissed. But impostors soon ceased, when it was known there would be a searching investigation. Where there was real need, the deacon next endeavoured to ascertain whether there was not some resource to save the applicant from pauperism, that is, work for him to do, or some near relative that would assist him over his difficulties. Even if there was need, and no apparent help, the deacons would not immediately place him on the pauper roll; they would stand aside, as it were, and leave the case to itself, while secretly they were keeping a watchful eye upon the man that he might not starve, or sink into extreme suffering. But almost as sure as they stood aside, it was found that ample assistance flowed in upon him from private sources of benevolence, particularly from his own neighbours who might be better off than himself, or who could spare something from their little store.

'Were it right,' demands Chalmers, brightening over an instance of this kind—'Were it right that any legal charity whatever should arrest a process so beautiful? Were it even right that the interference of the wealthier at

a distance should lay a freezing interdict on the play of those lesser streams which circulate round the abode of penury and pain?'

In cases of helpless destitution, sufficient relief was afforded from the church-door collections, but always in the guise of being only temporary.

Before he entered upon his pastorate, the cost of pauperism in the parish had sometimes amounted to £1400; he reduced it to about £250—that is, £200 for the old cases which he had inherited, and £50 for the new. He reduced the average cost to £30 per 1000, whereas the average cost of the other parishes in Glasgow was about £200, and in many parishes in England was upwards of £1000, per 1000 of the population. From the close resident agency, imposture was impossible; it was to the really indigent alone that the relief went; and the relief was so judiciously and kindly distributed, and the agents and other friends were so serviceable to the poor, in a thousand ways, that the parish of St. John's became exposed to an undue influx of the poor, instead of their being driven out, as was the prediction of those wise heads, the

practical men. Instead of any compulsory assessment, the voluntary contributions were so abundant as to swell into large balances, which were ultimately applied to the erection and endowment of schools for the children of the parish. More agents offered than were needed; few retired—they grew to the love of their work; and, indeed, instead of any burden upon them, it was found, after the machinery was once fairly set agoing, that about three hours a month was all that was required for the full performance of their duties.

This system of management lasted eighteen years—fourteen after Chalmers left Glasgow; and was given up from no defects in itself, but owing to causes altogether extraneous. Of its complete success there never has been any serious question; the only attempts have been, to give some exceptional solutions of that success, to make out that it could not be of universal application. I can state for myself, after much consideration, that there are some theoretical objections to this plan, for which it may be difficult to find the exact theoretical answer; but there are none that cannot be met by a

better than a theoretical answer, namely, in the established facts of the experiment itself.

An able and impartial witness, Mr. Tuffnel, English Poor-Law Commissioner in 1833, when the plan was still in active operation, has borne this undisputed testimony in its favour:

'This system has been attended with the most triumphant success for thirteen years; it is now in perfect operation, and not a doubt is expressed by its managers of its continuing to remain so. . . . The essence of the St. John's management consists in the superior system of inspection which it establishes. . . . This personal attention of the rich to the poor seems to be one of the most efficient modes of preventing pauperism.'

Chalmers' own final comprehensive deduction from his whole experience, is this:

'It remains an article in our creed . . . that, for the relief of general indigence, the charity of law ought, in every instance, to be displaced, to make room for the charity of principle and of spontaneous kindness.'

His method, as we have said, to yield any available instruction, must be studied in its

details and its actual working; but we may compress its main operations into the following rules:—

First,—Spontaneous charity organized within a definite locality, finally to do away all compulsory assessment.

Second,—This spontaneous charity to be dispensed either in connection with local churches, or through the medium of voluntary local associations.

Third,—The area of each particular management not to exceed a population of 2000; such area to be subdivided into proportions of about 80 families each, or 400 individuals.

Fourth,—Each proportion to be placed under the charge of one or more agents, as may be necessary. The agents, so far as possible, to be resident within their respective proportions.

Fifth,—The agents to have the usual duties of inspection, to make themselves acquainted with the poor of their proportions, to receive applications, investigate cases, and report to the committee or aggregate body of management; and, under advice and direction of

such committee or body, either to refuse relief, or grant such relief under such conditions as may appear most advantageous.

Sixth,—The constant object to be, to discriminate and beneficially assist the really necessitous and deserving poor; to diminish and ultimately extinguish pauperism; and to foster amongst the poor the habits of industry, prudence, frugality, saving, an honest desire to rise in the world, and single dependence on their own exertions.

These precious experiences of Chalmers were passed over with neglect at the time, or treated as Utopian. 'O this would be all very well, if we had a *Chalmers* in every parish!' He repeated his warnings,—still unheeded, even rebuked as a kind of hard-hearted dogmatist,—when the rash and mischievous Act of 1845 discharged upon Scotland all the evils from which England had so long been suffering. But stern necessity and wide-spreading alarm at the present bursting forth of all the sewers of pauperism, are forcing the public everywhere to the conclusions which Chalmers, fifty years ago, dinned into the ears of his thoughtless countrymen. Not

to speak of England, where the poor-rates have increased from five and a half millions in 1859 to seven and a half millions in 1868, and where the system is straining, as if on the eve of explosion,—look at the revulsion of opinion all through Scotland, among men of property, and of observation, and of well-regulated benevolence. In the evidence lately taken before the Parliamentary Committee on the Scottish Poor-Laws, how unanimous and emphatic are all the witnesses—especially those who have no official bias, and even most of the officials too—as to the belief, now fixed in the minds of the poor in Scotland, that the parish is bound to provide for them; how, with this belief, pauperism is increasing, and all the old pride and decency of the Scottish peasantry are disappearing; how the poor are sinking in degradation and ever deeper misery, whilst property is being eaten up, without doing any sensible good, only aggravating the disease. Almost all admit, that the only remedy is to return as far as possible to Chalmers' principles,—of stifling the idea of any right to relief; of making the inspection more close and efficient; and of calling in more and

more the healthful processes of spontaneous charity. Already a most promising Association has been instituted in Edinburgh for improving the condition of the poor; it is shaped on the Chalmers model of subdividing large cities into convenient proportions,—'little Kilmanies,'—and placing each of them under their voluntary agents. London is giving signs of resorting to the same plan,—in fact, to Chalmers' plan. All the recent experiments—in Elberfeld (Prussia), in Paris, in New York—just read like so many variations of Chalmers' plan in St John's, fifty years ago,—the same local subdivisions, the same willingness of unpaid agents, the same close inspection of cases, the really indigent properly relieved, imposition exploded, pauperism becoming extinguished in the fulness and heartiness of spontaneous benevolence. I do not say they have borrowed from him, but they have verified his declarations, and they have vindicated him from the little men who mocked at his warnings, and, indeed, all his work. What the sagacity of genius taught Chalmers fifty years ago, the necessity of circumstances is now imposing upon the statesmen and civic admini-

strators both in Britain and upon the Continent, and amongst our kindred of the great West.

Listen,—for the very breath and life of our body politic are depending upon a wise solution as to our pauperism,—listen, then, to a few out of the many valuable testimonies given before the Committee now sitting on the Scottish Poor-Laws.

'Nobody,' says Dr. Alexander Wood of Edinburgh, 'who sees the operation of the Act as at present administered, doubts for an instant that every pauper claims, as a right, to be supported.'

'I look,' says Mr. Ballingal of Islay, who has been member of twenty-eight parochial boards, 'I look upon this delusion, this fallacy, of . . . giving of a legal right for support to the dissolute, the intemperate, and the idle, as the key to the whole mystery of the increasing pauperism in Scotland as well as in England.'

'It is now,' says the present chairman of the Board of Supervision in Edinburgh, 'a matter of trite observation, that all poor-laws have an inherent tendency to foster pauperism, to increase the expenditure for the relief of the poor,

and to deteriorate the character of the population among whom the law is administered.'

'In 1845' (the date of the new law), says Mr. Smythe, secretary to the Inquiry in 1843, 'there were only 230 assessed parishes, and 650 which raised their funds by voluntary contributions; and in 1868 there were 790 assessed, and 97 which raised their funds by voluntary contributions.'

'The number of poor on the roll,' says Dr. Alexander Wood, 'in 1845 was 63,070. In 1868 it was 80,032. . . . Then of casual poor, in 1845, the number was 26,894. In 1868 it was 37,882. . . . Then the total expenditure, exclusive of buildings, in 1845, was £295,232. In 1868, it was £795,483. . . . The expense of management has increased from £17,445 in 1845, to £94,452 in 1868.'

'There is a general and ever-increasing dissatisfaction with our whole poor-law system,' says Mr. Milne Home of Wedderburn, vice-president of the Royal Society, a large landed proprietor, and a most watchful and accurate observer; 'and a belief exists,' he adds, 'that unless some remedy be speedily adopted, the

effects will be disastrous, morally, socially, and economically.'

As to the benefit of near local inspection of cases, Mr. Ballingal says: 'I account for . . . economy in the reduced areas by the increased supervision of the ratepayers, and narrower scrutiny on their part.'

'Previous to the alteration in 1845,' says Dr. Begg, who, with a wonderfully observant and penetrating mind, has had a wide experience in the management of Scottish parishes,—'previous to the alteration in 1845, there were 7542 men giving their gratuitous assistance in the management of the poor, including ministers and elders, and others; that is to say, an average of nearly eight in each parish in Scotland. . . . These men visited the poor; and the truth is, that we knew every case of a poor person, . . . and they knew perfectly well that they could not impose upon us. . . . I believe that that was one of the great secrets in the old system of administration, that ordinarily they did not attempt to impose upon us.'

On the ready zeal of voluntary agents, Dr. Wood says: 'I would not answer theoretically,

but appeal to experience. I would appeal first to the experience of Dr. Chalmers, when he found that there was not the slightest difficulty in getting visitors. I would appeal to the experience in Elberfeld, where they find that there are more who offer themselves as volunteers than they have room to accept. I would appeal to the experience in Paris, where they find the same. I would appeal to the experience in Dresden.' And as to the experience in the Edinburgh Association, he testifies: 'We have upwards of 1000 agents now at work, and very few have retired from the work; and what has given us great encouragement about it is, that those who are working are always expressing more and more interest in it, and are getting more and more devoted to it.'

XIII.

THE CITY OF GOD.

THE great Christian heroes of all time, from their different points of view, and with very different aims and objects—Augustin, Hildebrand, Bernard, Calvin, Knox, and, within our own century, Arnold of Rugby—have all wished and longed and laboured, not only for the salvation of individual souls, but for some higher state of general society; where truth shall guide the actions of men, justice and love banish grasping selfishness; where the pure heart and the innocent life shall bring a pleasure unknown to pride and sensuality; where war and tyranny shall only be recollections of a barbarous past; where peace, and a more equalized comfort and happiness, shall bind men together in the

faith and love of a common Father in heaven. This ideal social state, Augustin himself hath beautifully denominated 'THE CITY OF GOD.'

No Christian hero ever longed and laboured more than Chalmers for the establishment of the City of God. From the first moment that he was himself entered a freeman of the City, his daily endeavour was to diffuse its celestial privileges as far and wide as his influence or example could penetrate. He was no dreamer, although petty, superficial people, who never performed a single fact all their lives, or understood a fact, will sneer at him as a dreamer, and not a man of facts. He was no dreamer, no speculatist; he groaned over no imaginary evils; he painted up no fictitious scenes of felicity. He was a mathematico-physicist, as we have said; or, as he said of himself, he had the special faculties of a military engineer. His base of operations was always upon the solid earth; he followed its configuration, adapted himself to its gradients, took advantage of every strong position, and out of the actual ascertained qualities of human nature, he would build up his City of God. He

felt that the real welfare of men, of nations and communities, springs less from legislative or political, than from moral causes, — from causes, therefore, in their own power; in short, from their own principles and conduct, their wisdom or folly, their self-control or their reckless self-indulgence; and from their mutual bearing towards one another, whether in the spirit of love, or the spirit of hatred or of indifference. The first thing to seek, therefore, is the welfare of the great preponderating mass, that is, the poor—the *millions;* for if they are faring well, society in general will be sound, comfortable, and secure; if they are faring ill, society will be diseased, and tending to some fatal catastrophe. The bane of modern artificial society (what makes it the city of the devil and not of God), is the separation and hostility of classes: the poor, especially in large towns, left aside as outcasts; the rich holding aloof in dangerous isolation and grandeur — objects of envy when their mountain stands strong— targets of revolution when their mountain is shaken by any convulsion from beneath.

Fifty years ago, especially,—when Government,

aristocracy, plutocracy, privileged clergy, seemed to vie with each other in the neglect of the poorer classes,—Chalmers, conservative as he was in his instincts, and deliberate and careful before he vented the language of denunciation, was sometimes roused into a sacred fury, that rolled through the concave like the *woes* pronounced by Isaiah or Ezekiel!

'There are times which call for the intrepidity of an old prophet; and whether in dealing with the high or low, it should be alike freely and alike fearlessly with both. The poor, on the one hand, must bear to be told that they do very ill; but not without telling the rich, on the other, that they have done much worse. The truth is, that the greatest palliation for the misconduct of the poor, for their recklessness, for their ruinous squanderings, their low and loathsome dissipations, is the cruel neglect and abandonment of them by the upper ranks of society. It is chiefly in towns where the greatest moral injustice has been done to them: abandoned wholesale to ignorance and vice; dispossessed of all their moral privileges, whether in schools for their young, or in churches for

their general population; spoiled of their parochial inheritance, which had come down from their forefathers, by a griping magistracy, who have seized on their places in the house of God, and thus made merchandise of their souls to the highest bidder. . . . No wonder that, thus driven from the ordinances of the gospel, and abandoned to Sabbath profanation, a general week-day profligacy should have followed in its train; and that families, thus made worthless, should have soon become wretched; and that filth and poverty and physical abominations should have accumulated in all plebeian quarters of the town, whose inhabitants, literally cast off by their superiors, with whom they were wont to have associated as fellow-worshippers in the temple of their God, have sunk beneath the level of our common humanity.'

The separate and hostile classes must be brought together, not by a mere vague general sentiment of goodwill, but by the warm ties of a local and individual connection. Every man, the poorest, must find himself in a *territory* — the spot of his special affections, where the influences of religion and education and friendly

intercommunion must be brought nigh to every door. The poor will feel themselves raised in the social scale; will be aided, when aid is needed, by private and cordial and ungrudging beneficence; a slothful or vicious pauperism will gradually be extinguished; the labourers, by foresight, self-restraint, and frugality, will command a larger share in the fruits of production, and may rise to a comfort and competency indefinite. And, as a reconciliation is thus growing between man and man, the present outcast population will be softened in their hearts, and prepared to listen more willingly to the ambassador for Christ, when he beseeches the most hardened to enter also into a reconciliation with God.

Fortified by his experience at Glasgow, which had confirmed and developed the theories of earlier years, Chalmers virtually consecrated the remainder of his life (upwards of twenty years) to the building of this City of God, or to the training of a fresh generation of builders. His enterprise was carried out in two forms: *first*, that of PAROCHIAL EXTENSION, until not one individual should be an outcast, except of

his own perversity; *second*, that of the EXTINCTION OF PAUPERISM, through the improved habits of the poor, and the considerate brotherliness of the rich.

He made the most astonishing progress; but, like all heroes, had his combats and disasters; and, like Nehemiah rebuilding Jerusalem, had often to build with 'his sword girded by his side.' He had first of all to bear the brunt of the *Voluntary* controversy, which would sweep away the whole materials with which he was building; and, when that onset was slackened, he was paralyzed by the *Disruption* when his workmen were scattered hither and thither, taken away for other pressing exigencies, and the building of the glorious City was suspended in the violences and retaliations of an intestine war.

XIV.

THE PROFESSOR.

DURING these hard-working years in Glasgow, however, we find him, as we have noticed at all stages of his busy career, partaking of his full share of domestic and social enjoyments—of trips and tours and seasons of relaxation. He was a thorough economist of time, and did everything with a will; so that, whilst ever attentive to his duties, he had his spare days, sometimes spare weeks, which he generally employed in travelling to new scenes, thus adding to health, to the number of acquaintances, and to his stock of knowledge and experience. In the course of time, tethered though he was, he could boast of having visited almost every county in England, all in Scotland save one, besides excursions into Ireland, and,

finally, a voyage to France. We can do nothing but glance hurriedly at these side-movements—merely indicate them, as throwing light on the versatility of his character, and the activity and cheerfulness of his disposition.

He was twice in London during this Glasgow time: in 1817, when he preached the missionary sermon in Rowland Hill's; and again in 1822. On both occasions he was the guest and favourite of all that was highest and best and most illustrious in society. But this profuse attention never elates him; his heart is always at home, or turning to the great objects of his life, or chastening itself into humility before God. To take a few instances. After all the incense offered up to him in London, and through England, he writes to his beloved sister Jane, at Pudhill in Gloucestershire: 'The places and the people we have passed are so manifold, that I have but a dazzling and indistinct remembrance of the whole; and can only say, that the *Pudhill fortnight* is the period of our journey to which I look back with the truest satisfaction. . . . I cannot tell you how much my visit to Gloucestershire

has refreshed and renewed and deepened all my former attachment to you.' On returning from his journeys, what revels he used to hold with the little ones! 'The children were upstairs,' he writes on one of these occasions, 'while I settled with the porter in the lobby, and went afterwards to my own bedroom. I heard them come down in a very gleesome style; but they had to wait in the lobby till I came out, which when I did, they positively quivered and danced with pure gladness. I felt the cat and kitten principle most powerfully towards them, and spent a very joyous and thankful hour with them.' He has also begun, when absent, to write letters to some of his children, that remind one of Luther's quaint and pretty and sweet-hearted letters to his 'little Johnnie.' But the cat is often teased by the kitten; so good papas must bear the penalty of their lavish endearments. For at another time he laughingly lodges a complaint in writing to their mother: 'Was greatly fashed with the restlessness of the bairns upon the sofa—at one time pressing in between me and the back of it; at another, standing upright

and coming suddenly down upon me; at a third, sitting upon its elevated border and repeating this threatening position, forgetful of all my biddings upon the subject, and, in fact, putting me into a perfect fry with their most incessant and ungovernable locomotion.' Then, in a different, a deeply-subdued mood, after returning from one of his periods of travel and ovation, he thus unbosoms his feelings of holy fear and watchfulness to his sister Jane: 'I have reason to pray and to strive lest the busy routine of operations should altogether secularize me. It is a withering world,—a dry and a thirsty land where no water is,—a place of exile from the fountain of life and light that is laid up in the Divinity.'

The family, who had long been spared any bereavement, lost their venerable head in the summer of 1818. The old man sank rapidly, but quietly, under paralysis and a gentle decay. Many of the members of the family were around him; and he had the ineffable satisfaction of receiving the last consolations of the faith from that son, once the cause of much anxiety, but for many years the object of so much delight

and love. Decaying away, but suffering no pain, sleeping, then looking up and smiling dimly, he was truly becoming a little child, meet for the kingdom of heaven; and the last words heard from him were the sick child's whisper to comfort its mother: 'I'll maybe be better the morn!' He died at early morning of Sabbath; and Thomas thus announces the death to Jane: 'It is truly affecting when the thought of former Sabbaths in Anster presents itself to my mind, and I think of it as the day he loved; and how the ringing of the bells was ever to him the note of joyful invitation to the house of God. . . . My dear father is lovely in death. There is all the mildness of heaven upon his aged countenance. My mother bears up to the great satisfaction of us all. She sits much in the room where the venerable remains are lying.'

In 1823 the chair of Moral Philosophy at St. Andrews became vacant; it was spontaneously and unanimously offered to Chalmers. Could he accept it? Could he withdraw himself from the scene of wide-spread usefulness which had opened before him in Glasgow? Could he

forsake that band of generous friends who had heaped upon him such tokens of attachment? who had placed at his command at all times their services and their purses? Could he tear himself from a congregation that so deeply reverenced him, and so eagerly drank from his lips the words of divine instruction and reproof and consolation? Could he, above all, desert his body-guard of agents, who, in the lanes and dens of the city, were the active instruments for realizing his ideals of local superintendence and social improvement? These were bitter questions. On the other hand, the eight years of stern, unremitting work at Glasgow, if it had not seriously affected his health, was now at length weighing down his energies, and weakening the composure and collectedness of his mind. His early, and his long-continued ambition, besides, had been to be a professor in one of the Universities. He had much of the professorial bent and habit; he had little pleasure in the buzz of popularity, and would prefer, at any time, the approbation of one judicious and instructed mind, to the loudest acclamations of an excitable multitude. He felt also that in

Glasgow he had sufficiently expounded all his views, and impressed them with the stamp of incontestable experience; that the time had arrived when other and fresher men might enter into his labours; and that he could now be more usefully employed at the fountainhead of thought, in filling the souls of those young men who, in their various avocations and professions, would have the moulding of future generations.

The latter arguments prevailed, and he accepted the chair.

He entered upon his duties at St. Andrews in session 1823–4. Now commenced his long career as professor, extending over twenty-three years, terminating only with his death. In 1828 he was elected Professor of Theology in the University of Edinburgh, a position which he held till the Disruption, in 1843. Immediately after that event, he resigned his chair at the University, and accepted the appointment of Principal and Primarius Professor of Theology in the Free Church College.

I will not venture upon an examination of his teachings in ethics or in theology. The present

STUDY is rather directed to his actions, and to the impress which he gave to public events, than to his speculations and doctrines. Besides, to discuss his opinions as a professor, or fix his grade as a philosopher or theologian, would require more space than we have here to bestow, and more technical learning than we possess. Those who are competent to judge agree in this verdict, that he cannot be said to have added anything new to the body of speculative or theological thought; but still he had conspicuous merits, which must ever raise him high amongst the masters of youth.

Whatever he undertook, he brought into its service that constitutional intensity of which we have so frequently spoken; which at once illuminated his own area of knowledge, and projected it into the minds of others with a definiteness and living effect, which the mere formal professor never can reach, whatever be the extent and profundity of his acquirements. It is like the difference between a region of country presented to the eye by a land surveyor and by a landscape painter. That this was so in the lectures of Chalmers, is shown by innu-

merable testimonies. Thus one of his students in St. Andrews, who had also been under that very diligent and successful teacher, Professor Jardine of Glasgow, describes how Chalmers, 'in a few emphatic and impassioned sentences, . . . set before us the whole philosophy of a subject, and that in so compact and portable a form, that it was transferred, not only to our note-books, but *lodged for life in our minds*, under the triple guardianship of the understanding, the imagination, and the heart.' His singularly realistic power—the magic by which he could make the ear *see* (as the Arabians say)—is admirably expressed in an account given of his first theological lecture in the University of Edinburgh. 'To this hour I dwell with all the mysterious delight that is awakened by some grand choral symphony, on some of his novel expressions, which, borrowed from physical science, directly tended, *by almost more than the force of the best diagrams*, to make his noble thoughts all our own.' He was purely conscientious, amazingly industrious, made himself master of the literature of his subjects, and trusted nothing to the mere attractions of his

eloquence. But, after all, the unequalled value of his teachings lay in this—in his intense realism, by which the truths of philosophy and theology came bodily before the eyes of the students, 'by more than the force of the best diagrams.'

If he had not the originality, often more showy than real, of knocking down all the structures of his predecessors, and running up some new lath and plaster of his own instead, he had that genuine originality as a professor, which Stuart Mill has ascribed to him as an economist: 'always the merit of studying phenomena *at first hand*, and expressing them in a language of his own.' He might receive the first suggestions from outer sources—from the traditions in which he had been brought up, or from favourite authors, such as Butler and Edwards; but these mere suggestions were all submitted to a complete process of digestion; they were all assimilated to his own nature; and came out, if not changed, at least specialized. They were not paint taken from Butler or Edwards, but the living flesh and colour of Thomas Chalmers. His moral and

theological works, — especially the latest of them, his *Institutes of Theology*,—if they want the dash of innovation and paradox, have all the solidity and natural glow of individualism. He was a slow thinker, as we have said: wherever the suggestions might come from, he meditated over them long and deeply; and before he uttered them, they were bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh, and jets of his heart's blood. Hence the overwhelming vitality of his utterance. Hence, also, there was always a something peculiar in the views of Chalmers, — for instance, on the mysterious process in a soul drawing nigh unto God and becoming the subject of His grace,—which did not altogether satisfy, what he termed with some amount of horror, *ultra-orthodoxy*. As life advanced, and the spirit bathed deeper and deeper in that communion with God which was first revealed to the world by the publication of his Journals, we can trace a more solemn humility, and also a more filial boldness, and more taking the mind of God from His own word than from the interpretations of men, who speak from many notions and for many pur-

poses, often from sectarian bias and spiritual pride. No one who listens attentively to his later breathings, but must feel that that wonderful inner life with God, which he lived during his last years, was not only steeping his affections in a heavenly peace, but was also simplifying and elevating his intellectual apprehension of the truths of religion. Hear some of these secret breathings.

'Set me loose from the influence of human authority, in so far as it distorts or diverts or deafens the direct impression of Thine own word upon my conscience. Let me call none Master but Christ; and aid me, Almighty Father! in the work of teaching others, that I may not mislead them into error, but rather enable me to disperse and clear away any darkening medium which may now lie between their souls and that Bible which is the alone lamp unto our feet, and light unto our path.'

'Let me not be the slave of human authority, but clear my way through all creeds and confessions to Thine own original revelation.'

'Deliver me from the narrowing influence of human lessons, and more especially of human

systems of theology. Teach me directly out of the fulness and freeness of Thine own word.

'Let Thy Bible, O God! be henceforward my supreme directory; nor let me incur the condemnation of those who either add to its words, or take away from them.'

But his power as a professor sprung, above all, from that influence over his students, which we can only express by the occult quality of *fascination.* He was of the rare order whose students are their children; who draw to themselves that young love which is above the love of women; and, by some magnetic power, bring the youths flocking to them from afar and from the ends of the earth. Himself always young, he had the Socratic *eros* about him — the divine love for youth, identifying them with truth and progress, which elicited their fondest regard in return. Modern Universities scarcely afford a parallel; one must go back to the attractions of an Abelard or a Ramus. The nearest was his own contemporary and fellow-academician, Sir William Hamilton, who diffused the same kind of spell; but it wanted a certain celestial ingredient,—the love to Chalmers was

also a *Christian* love. Many, perhaps most, were not his students only, but his spiritual children.

One who has either sat at his feet, or mingled intimately among his disciples, testifies, in the *North British Review* of 1852, to the universality and depth of this affection.

'Scotland is now filled with men, and England has more than a few such, who are never weary in giving utterance to their feelings when they speak of those times of happy excitement which they spent in the moral philosophy or the theology class-room, while Dr. Chalmers held the mind and soul of all present in his powerful grasp. . . . Whether or not, as professor of moral philosophy or of theology, he has materially advanced sacred and ethical science, it is quite certain that from his chair he did render a service to his country which was incomparably of higher importance and value, inasmuch as he sent forth over its surface a body of men who, if they turn not aside from the path whereon he set them forward, may, and with God's help will, bring about . . . the Christian regeneration of Scotland.'

XV.

INCIDENTS OF THE ST. ANDREW'S TIME.

HIS four years at St. Andrews was an interval of great quietness,—busy as regarded his professorial duties, but with few of those public engagements and distractions in which he had been so generally involved. It was a transition, a resting-place to gather breath and energy, in passing from the herculean achievements of his middle age to the almost tragical revolutions of his latter years.

St. Andrews, though historical, and celebrated as a city, was really a small place, with all the gossip and rivalries of small places. It was divided into its various University and official *families*—exclusive, prim, and jealous; and it was in many other ways uncongenial to him, for, as he writes at the time, 'Perhaps there is

no town in Scotland more cold and meagre and moderate in its theology than St. Andrews.' Yet the *families*, forgetting his youthful collisions when he would force his mathematics and chemistry upon them at the point of the bayonet, received him very graciously; the great world had been smiling upon him, and therefore St. Andrews smiled too. He was the favourite of society, the lion of the place; students were flocking to him even from foreign countries; and illustrious strangers, before visiting the cathedral, must first be introduced to Dr. Chalmers. He thus communicates his pleasurable sensations to a Glasgow lady friend: 'I am in great health and physical comfort in St. Andrews. . . . I am positively at this moment, and have been for many weeks, in the feeling of a most delicious repose. I know well, at the same time, that this may alienate from God; and that health, and friendship, and the enjoyment of old associations, and congenial literature, and animating success in labours which are light and exhilarating — that these may take possession of the heart as so many idols, and bring it altogether under the power of un-

godliness. Do let me have an interest in your prayers.'

When he got free from restraint, he had all the gaiety and playfulness of a boy; he had been long in harness at Glasgow, and now scampered at large in the full enjoyment of his liberty. He was laying in stores of health, in games at golf upon the Links, and long rambles on the coast. He had a frame of adamant, that bade defiance to weather, and that actually exulted in the wildness of the blast. Everybody knows what the *east wind* is, in spring or autumn, upon the east coast—fell, and nipping, and gnawing at the heart-strings like a vulture. Most people would rather stand the rack. Yet there are men of strong nerve and tough muscle and Norse vitality, who delight in it—like the Vikings of old, dashing into the storms of the northern sea with their black keels. Chalmers was a Norseman. A friend of mine met him one day careering along the sands of St. Andrews whilst the east wind was hissing from the bay. He was without an upper coat, had a great staff in his hand, his chest expanded, and cheeks glowing deep like bronze. Passing

in rapid strides, he ejaculated, with that husky, clanging voice of his, like that of a sea-bird, '*Fine bracing east wind this!*' My friend used to describe how this singular salutation impressed him with his powerful physique, his hardiness and elasticity. The east wind, which shrivels up others, was only a fine bracer to *him!*

In his college holidays he was off to Glasgow and the West, to the Borders, and again to London. Everywhere the most boyish glee! His Journal at this time is as good as a restorative to expel the vapours. It shows what a complete, full-made *Man* is,—with all the pores of humanity open,—with his 'time to weep, and his time to laugh; his time to mourn, and his time to dance.' We cannot resist transferring a few touches from the Journals, as we have sometimes done before, to relieve the sterner matter, and to indicate the genial common life that lay under his tremendous explosions and exertions —like the flowery spots, and the bright gushing rills, that are hid in the retirements of some volcanic mountain.

Being a punctual and voluminous correspon-

dent, when he is away in the West, in the month of July, he is ever letter-writing to Mrs. Chalmers, and he never forgets the *bairns*. 'I want each letter you receive from me to be signalized by a feast of strawberries to the children, on the day of its arrival. Therefore I expect that on Saturday, which will be the day of your receiving this, these strawberries, with a competent quantity of cream and sugar, shall be given accordingly, and given from me, the papa of these said children, each and all of them being told that he is the donor of the same.' In returning from the West, he fell in somewhere with a jovial company of the St. Andrews professors—Dr. Nicoll, Dr. Hunter, Gillespie, and his own 'dear Tom Duncan,' now professor of mathematics. 'With all the convivialities of the West,' he moralizes, 'I have seen no such guzzling as to-day with my St. Andrews friends. . . . They are rare lads—these leet*erati* or eat*erati*! . . . I got the large bedroom in which Mr. Duncan was the night before, and he had a closet with a small sofa-bed that communicated with the room . . . *I like him*.' So next morning, to give him sensible proofs of his *liking*:

'Got up about eight; went to Mr. Duncan's closet, and got behind him in his sofa-bed, where I had a good purchase for jamming him out, and did so accordingly.' Then, after this free-and-easy process of tumbling a friend out of his bed, he goes on quite composedly to record, 'Had cordial talk with him.' When in Galloway, he made a pilgrimage to the manse of Kirkmabreck, where the gifted Thomas Brown, the metaphysician, was born, whose sun, alas! went down at the noon of his powers and fame. Chalmers highly appreciated him,—all the more that he had been treading over the same ground in the moral philosophy class at St. Andrews; and he paid this visit with a great feeling of seriousness and interest. But we shall see how his gravity was upset by his excessive perception of the ludicrous. 'Was shown the room of his birth, and the place where his father recited his sermons in a wood at the back of his garden, behind which there was also shown to me a place where the children used to roast potatoes. It seems that Dr. Brown, in his last visit to the manse, was shown all these localities, and was thrown into a flood of sensibility therewith;

and I was in a very grave and pathetic mood myself when surveying all these classic and interesting remains, when Sibbald (the minister of Kirkmabreck), who is a great droll, put the whole to flight by telling me, in a very odd way, that Dr. Brown's cousin was with him, who, unable to comprehend or sympathize with this whole process of weeping and sobbing, asked him in a very gruff way, "What are ye makin' sic a wark aboot, man?" The incongruity of the one man's speech with the other man's sentimentalism threw me into immoderate peals of laughter, which really disturbed and discomposed the whole proper effect of my visit.'

On repairing to London, in the spring of 1827, when there was talk about calling him to the chair of Moral Philosophy in London University, he met with all the usual distinguished attentions from the members of Government and of Parliament, bishops and earls, and all the rest. The most curious scene, however, was a visit to Coleridge, who was then living with the Gilmans at Highgate; he was accompanied by Edward Irving and some other

literary friends. What a picture does his account of the interview present, of a certain kind of reverence, but of the want of any common understanding between the two great minds,—'alike, yet, ah! how different!'—the mystic and the positivist.

'We spent three hours with the great Coleridge. He lives with Dr. and Mrs. Gilman on the same footing that Cowper did with the Unwins. His conversation, which flowed in a mighty, unremitting stream, is most astonishing, but, I must confess, to me still unintelligible. I caught occasional glimpses of what he would be at; but mainly he was very far out of all sight and all sympathy. . . . You know that Irving sits at his feet, and drinks in the inspiration of every syllable that falls from him. There is a secret and, to me as yet, unintelligible communion of spirit betwixt them, on the ground of a certain German mysticism and transcendental lake poetry, which I am not yet up to. Gordon' (that was the truthful yet gentle Robert Gordon, then the most popular of the Edinburgh ministers, a man of mathematical and positive head like Chalmers),—'Gordon

says, it is all "unintelligible nonsense;" and I am sure a plain Fife man as Uncle Tammas' (old Thomas Ballardie, who tried to begin him in mathematics), 'had he been alive, would have pronounced it the greatest *buff* he had ever heard in his life.'

In all seasons — bright as well as dark, whether rambling or strenuously at work, amid opposition or flattery—he retained the same unvarying composure of mind, the same sincerity, simplicity, and benevolence. We have a very careful portraiture of him, sketched at this time by the experienced and picturesque hand of Mrs. Grant of Laggan, — a portraiture which might equally be applied to any period of his mature life, so uniform were the lineaments.

'You ask me to tell you about Dr. Chalmers. I must tell you first, then, that of all men he is the most modest, and speaks with undissembled gentleness and liberality of those who differ from him in opinion. Every word he says has the stamp of genius; yet the calmness, ease, and simplicity of his conversation is such that to ordinary minds he might appear an ordinary man. I had a great intellectual feast about

three weeks since. I breakfasted with him at a friend's house, and enjoyed his society for two hours with great delight. Conversation wandered into various channels ; but he was always powerful, always gentle, and always seemed quite unconscious of his own superiority. I had not been an hour at home when a guest arrived who had become a stranger to me for some time past. It was Walter Scott, who sat a long time with me, and was, as he always is, delightful. His good nature, good humour, and simplicity, are truly charming. You never once think of his superiority, because it is evident he does not think of it himself. He, too, confirmed the maxim, that true genius is ever modest and careless. After his greatest literary triumphs, he is like Hardyknute's son after a victory, when, we are told,

> "With careless gesture, mind unmoved,
> On rode he o'er the plain."

Mary and I could not help observing certain similarities between these two extraordinary persons (Chalmers and Scott) : the same quiet, unobtrusive humour, the same flow of rich, original conversation,—easy, careless, and visibly

unpremeditated; the same indulgence for others, and readiness to give attention and interest to any subject started by others. There was a more chastened dignity and occasional elevation in the divine than in the poet; but many resembling features in their modes of thinking and manner of expression.'

And now, when in his forty-seventh year, the 'old things' of his Anster home were entirely to pass away. His mother died in the month of February 1827. We have already had to speak of her, both in appearance and in character. She had been living truth, and living diligence, and living rectitude; at first, just and exact, rather than outwardly pleasing. But the loss of her husband, her comparative retirement from the business of the world, the even tenor of her way, intercourse with her great son, the diffusive influence of her deep-implanted piety,—all had been softening her into a tranquil meekness, and into more of the outward display of kindness and affection. Thomas was with her through her last illness, as he had been with his father; but she never sank into the father's feebleness and decay; her mind was stedfast in death as in life. Her

son's memorials of her last hours are grandly solemn. How far beyond the scenes of the dramatist, or the tenderest imaginings of the poet! Look to these mingling tints, soft and rich as the disappearing gleams of the rainbow:

'About half an hour before her death, she audibly ordered the curtains to be drawn aside, and the shutters opened.

'Let me not forget the look which she cast upon me, when I lifted her into a sitting posture.

'After being adjusted to sit, she said audibly that it was fine,—"That's fine!"

'One of her latest articulations was, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"'

XVI.

POLITICAL REVOLUTION.

ABOUT the time that Chalmers entered upon the chair of Theology in Edinburgh, 1828, there were unmistakeable symptoms of a total break-up of the old *George-the-Third* Toryism. Canning had already cut all connection with the blasphemous 'Holy Alliance' of the continental despots; he had breathed a more generous spirit into our foreign policy; shown a disposition, whilst avoiding the extremities of war, to befriend the weaker nationalities against their overbearing neighbours; and he had 'called the new world into existence,' as he proudly though somewhat prematurely boasted, 'to redress the balance of the old.' His skilful and far-sighted coadjutor, Huskisson,

so far as prejudices and circumstances would allow, had been throwing off the trammels of monopoly; been giving fuller scope to the play of industry and commerce; been, in fact, anticipating the triumphs of Free Trade. In this very 1828 and 1829, the two strongest ramparts of ancient Toryism were carried by storm and levelled in the dust—I mean, the civil and political disqualifications of the Dissenters in England, and of the Roman Catholics throughout Britain and Ireland. After a sleep of half a century, disturbed only by fitful mutterings and convulsive starts, the British people—the middle and literary and industrial classes—were awakening to a sense of their strength, and a determination to make that strength be felt in the highest places of the Old Oligarchy.

Chalmers, always the friend of practical reforms as distinguished from organic convulsions, came forward boldly in the General Assembly of 1828, and moved, though he was not able to carry, an address of congratulation to the Crown on the emancipation of the Dissenters; and, in one of the most memorable public meetings ever held in Edinburgh, in March 1829, he pleaded

for a similar relief to the Roman Catholics—a cause which he had advocated from his youth, in the face of the popular odium at that time, and of still prevailing religious scruples and apprehensions.

It so happened that I was present at this latter meeting, in favour of the Roman Catholic emancipation; and the whole scene and incidents are as recent in my memory as if they had only happened yesterday. It was my first session at College, and I need not say how eager the youthful student is, when he comes fresh from the country into the great city, to see all the celebrated men, and be present at all notable meetings and spectacles. According to my recollection, it was a raw, damp forenoon, that 14th of March, in 'the grey metropolis of the north.' The meeting was to be about mid-day; but long before the hour, thousands were pressing thick around the entrance of the hall in George Street. There were only men, but they were of all ages, from the stripling at College, like myself, to the grey-headed citizen. They were very good-natured, joking and bantering in the manner of crowds; but there was a great deal of intelli-

gent conversation; there was some diversity of opinion, but no violence. The Whigs predominated, from their shops and offices in the High Street and the Bridges; and were all in a chuckle to see old Scotch Toryism, that once held 'the crown of the causey,' now tottering to its fall. There were glowing anticipations of the meeting,—an undisguised feeling of pride, that Edinburgh could turn out upon the platform such a cluster of eminent and really influential men. After more than an hour's waiting out in the *harr*, which had been passed with wonderful patience, the doors were flung open. I need not describe the series of purgatorial sensations, the tremendous heave, the headlong rush, the ground-swells that bear the helpless individual hither and thither, the last fell squeeze, the grind of the mill as we pass through, then the tumble out into the unknown, the wild hurried look round to catch our bearings, and, finally, the desperate scramble for some place of refuge and observation. We outsiders found, to our disgust, that the body of the hall had been packed beforehand; and for a while we made a hearty use of the mob's

privilege, to groan, and hiss, and cry, 'Shame! shame!' But many of the favoured ones were ladies; so, from a motive of gallantry, I suppose, as well as because we had a vast extent of back-settlement to occupy, good-humour returned. We got into such places as we could, and the surging multitudes subsided by degrees into order, and at length into the hush of expectancy. My own position was a most untoward one. I was thrown back under the gallery amid a mass of strong grown-up men, who had no pity for my tender years. Instead of sitting down, they all sprang up and stood on the seats. I had to imitate their example; but, in the pressure, I had to stride, and plant one foot on one seat, the other on another, and would soon have tumbled, but that I was wedged in by the dense crowd round about me. Anon I was shut out from the light of this world; a fat old man behind me, eighteen stones at least, laid his whole weight upon my back; to obtain purchase to bear up such a load, I had to push my head into the back of the person in front of me; whilst another at my side, wishing to be relieved of his hat,

placed it over the top of my head. This was my position for the whole three or four hours,—crushed, blinded, stretched on a rack, suffocated in a living tomb, with nothing to support me but my neighbours jamming in opposite directions. After sinking for a while into a death-like stupor, in which all remembrance seems to have been lost, I was roused by a loud confused hum: 'They're coming—no—yes—there they are—that's—— hurrah! hurrah!'—long-continued shouting, which ended in clapping of hands, knocking with feet, and other customary demonstrations of public rejoicing, all of which fell upon some part of my devoted person. 'That's Jeffrey—there's Chalmers!'—everybody cried, and everybody rose on tip-toe to see; but, alas! my eyes were buried in one neighbour's back, whilst another's hat lay like a sod over my head, so that my mind, deprived of the external medium of sight, could only entertain itself with imaginary spectra of Francis Jeffrey and Thomas Chalmers. Fortunately, my ears were free, and they were as quick as youth and eager attention could make them.

The first thing I remember was Jeffrey,—

with his high, sharp, penetrating accent,—with some affectations of pronunciation and phrase, yet he delivered a fine fluent discourse, that carried the audience pleasantly along with him. I have brought nothing away, however, but one of his felicities of expression, when referring to the measure having been brought in by the Tories, and not by his own party, that he had had some difficulty to 'purge the leaven of Whiggism out of him,' but that he could now honestly participate in the general satisfaction. Then followed Sir James, afterwards Lord Moncreiff, with harsh but masculine utterance, conducting what I only remember as a vigorous forensic argument. Then Harry Cockburn, with his bland, homely voice, raising a laugh now and then by his pleasantries, and at times affecting the audience by a flow of simple, natural eloquence.

But my limbs were now fairly giving way under the Ossa of flesh that was piled above me; and, blind as the Titan, I was seized with some of his fury, and thought to end my pains by wildly jostling right and left into the ribs of my neighbours, who had been holding me

down for hours in this loathsome cavern. My struggles were no more to the huge party above me, than would be the stirrings of a field-mouse under the limbs of a superincumbent ox. Feeling my little convulsive twitchings below him, he kindly patted me on the shoulder, saying, 'My man, we must bear one another's burdens here!' in which maxim I would readily have agreed, if there had been any reciprocity.

In dumb and callous despair I yielded to my fate; and had no idea left but a low, feverish anxiety that this meeting—this burden—this misery were at an end.

But whence these symptoms of a strange, unusual emotion in the assembly? I am conscious of them, even in my enforced blindness and isolation. A power is rising!—what? who? First there was a hush, as if breath and movement had suddenly stopped; then people started to their feet; then there was a shout, a long, piercing shout, as of passionate triumph, which made my young temples throb, and—'Chalmers! Chalmers!' was on every tongue. Am I then to listen, for the first time, to the orator

whose periods I have so often recited with boyish rapture? whose fame has travelled beyond his own land (rare now with preachers!) and has become European, like Bossuet and Jeremy Taylor? The palpitations of my heart nearly drowned my hearing; weariness, weakness, pain were forgotten; even the blindness in which I stood ceased to be a privation; if I could not see him, I now heard with thrilling intensity every vibration, even the lightest that floated upon the air. Every one can feel how the ardent youth is entranced, is rapt, when he first comes into actual contact with the great man, the idol of his dreams.

'Hush! hush!'—and all was still.

At first,—let me own the first shock of disappointment that all have felt who ever heard him,—at first, from the far extremity of the room, there was a succession of guttural confused sounds, which I could not distinctly interpret into words; then vague words were heard, which I could scarcely weave into any meaning. There must be some mistake. Could this be the mighty Chalmers? Yet the people whose eyes were upon him, could be heard

drawing in their breath, silent and expectant. Sentence now heaved forth after sentence, with a kind of ponderous difficulty; yet there came ever and anon a reverberation, as of the volcano collecting the fiery materials of its discharge. The pitchy clouds dispersed; the showers of ashes were blown away, to my mind's eye (for my bodily eyes were shut in darkness); to my mind's eye the glare of an inward furnace shot forth; the flames of the volcano descended.

'How comes it that Protestantism made such triumphant progress in these realms when it had pains and penalties to struggle with? and how came this progress to be arrested from the moment it laid on these pains and penalties in its turn? . . . How is it that, when single-handed, Truth walked through our island with the might and prowess of a conqueror: so soon as propped by the authority of the State, and the armour of intolerance was given to her, the brilliant career of her victories was ended? It was when she took up the carnal, and laid down the spiritual weapon—it was then that strength went out of her. She was struck

with impotency on the instant that, from a warfare of principle, it became a warfare of politics.'

And now followed blaze after blaze, a succession of the same noble thoughts, the same Christian maxims, the same flashing antitheses, the same bold images, standing out like statues against the sky, the same force of language clinching every idea upon the minds of the subjugated hearers.

'We know the purpose of these disabilities. . . . They were intended as a line of circumvallation around the strongholds of the Protestant faith; and in effect they have been a line of circumvallation around the strongholds of the Catholic faith. It is to force those now difficult and inaccessible strongholds that I want this wall of separation taken down. . . . Had we been suffered to mingle more extensively with our Catholic fellow-subjects, and to company with them in the walks of civil and political business, there would at this day have been the transfusion of another feeling,—the breath of another spirit amongst them; nor should we have beheld, as now, the impracticable countenance, the resolute and unyielding

attitude, of our aggrieved and outcast population. . . . It is since the admission of intolerance, that unseemly associate, within our camp, that the cause of the Reformation has come down from its vantage-ground; and from the moment it wrested this engine from the hands of its adversaries, and began to wield and brandish it itself, from that moment it has been at a dead-stand. We want to be disencumbered of this weight, and to be restored thereby to our own free and proper energies. We want truth and force to be dissevered from each other, the moral and spiritual to be no longer implicated with the grossly physical. For never shall we prosper, and never shall we prevail in Ireland, till our cause be delivered from the outrage and the contamination of so unholy an alliance.'

I felt as I never felt before, and never again under any other man. It was not mere argument that swayed me; it was not mere eloquence that roused me; it was something indescribable. I felt as if carried away, not by any human power, but by some great force of nature. It was not the youthful bosom only

that was agitated; blind as I was, I felt the people around me quivering with emotion. The whole assembly were catching the inspiration of the master: a strange afflatus filled the hall. Peal after peal, becoming almost ceaseless, not of applause—the word is too cold, but where is the word sufficiently glowing?—of *profound spiritual sympathy*, attested how completely every soul there was under the domination of the one mighty ruling mind.

'What Sheridan said of the liberty of the press,' he exclaimed near the close, 'admits of most emphatic application to this religion of truth and liberty. "Give," says that great orator, "give to ministers a corrupt House of Commons; give them a pliant and a servile House of Lords; give them the keys of the Treasury and the patronage of the Crown,—and give me the liberty of the press; and with this mighty engine I will overthrow the fabric of corruption, and establish upon its ruins the rights and privileges of the people." In like manner, give the Catholics of Ireland their emancipation; give them a seat in the Parliament of their country; give them a free

and equal participation in the politics of the realm; give them a place at the right ear of majesty, and a voice in his councils,—and give me the circulation of the Bible; and with this mighty engine I will overthrow the tyranny of Antichrist, and establish the fair and original form of Christianity on its ruins.'

As a sudden springing breeze in the Highlands drives away the mists that all day long have shrouded the mountains, and in an instant reveals a Ben Lomond or a Ben More in all its rugged grandeur; so a strong, rapid movement through all the auditory at the close of this passage opened up a vista through which, for the first time, I saw the marvellous orator. There he was, still standing in the attitude in which he had 'overthrown the tyranny of Antichrist;' he was the impersonation of Truth, victorious in its own sublimity; he was still grasping the great staff which he had brought down with vehemence upon the floor as the symbol of the 'mighty engine' of overthrow; and the immense audience rose to him, and shouted back and back for several minutes their unison in the lofty strain.

It is no exaggeration when Dean Ramsay describes the scene:—'An excitement and enthusiasm pervaded the large and closely crowded assemblage seldom witnessed in modern times. I heard our most distinguished Scottish critic (Lord Jeffrey), who was present on the occasion, give it as his deliberate opinion, that never had eloquence produced a greater effect upon a popular assembly; and that he could not believe more had ever been done by the oratory of Demosthenes, Cicero, Burke, or Sheridan.'

The triumphs of religious emancipation in 1828 and 1829, instead of satisfying, only stimulated the spirit of liberty in Britain. Startling events on the Continent soon added to the intensity of the excitement. In the 'three days' of July 1830, the restored throne of the elder Bourbons—who had learned nothing and forgotten nothing—was shattered to pieces, and a free constitutional monarchy, as was fondly supposed, under the Orleans dynasty, was raised in its stead. The rebound of this wonderful popular revolution was felt through all Europe. In our own country it

took the form of a strenuous, irresistible demand for organic Parliamentary Reform. After a crisis that sometimes bordered on the excesses of revolution, this was conceded in 1832; and the fulcrum of governing power passed from a narrow exclusive oligarchy into the hands of the Middle Class.

The agitations in politics quickly communicated themselves to religion, or rather to those matters which are connected with the external organization of the Church. This especially in Scotland, where in all ages ecclesiastical and political movements have acted and reacted in sympathy. Almost contemporaneous with Parliamentary Reform, certain ecclesiastical movements commenced in Scotland, which shook the country for ten years, and whose consequences, mingling with many other causes, are affecting, and will long continue to affect, the whole ecclesiastical institutions in Britain. There was the wide-spread uprising against all Established Churches,—the crusade of Voluntaryism,—which for some years was most formidable, and threatened to engulph, as in a torrent, the cathedrals of England and Ireland as well as the humbler

kirks of Scotland. Then, in Scotland, to save the Establishment, and strengthen and popularize it, there was, *first*, a revival by Chalmers himself, but upon a national scale, of his parochial or local system, under the name of CHURCH EXTENSION; and, *second*, an effort to improve and elevate the ministry of the Established Church by a modification of PATRONAGE. Out of this double movement in the Scottish Establishment, by and by emerged a *third* form—the SPIRITUAL INDEPENDENCE of the Church, which soon swallowed up the other two, and almost the Church itself, and in which Chalmers became finally the leading champion.

The Reform agitation, and the inordinate hopes which it excited in the minds of the middle and labouring classes, quickened the intention, which he had long entertained, of collecting into a systematic work his doctrines in Political Economy; the whole tendency of which was to repress any large expectations of benefit from exterior causes or legislative measures, and to point to a sound education, and its influence in teaching forethought and self-restraint, as the only means by which the

labouring classes especially could be saved from want and misery, and raised to a condition of comfort, refinement, and social importance. By education, he meant not only instruction in letters and ordinary knowledge, but training in the principles and graces of the Christian life.

He gave therefore to the world, in the beginning of 1832, the result of these long and patriotic studies, in his *Political Economy, in connection with the Moral State and Moral Prospects of Society.*

A high eulogium has been pronounced on this work, and on the peculiar quality of his intellect, by one of our ablest thinkers, John Stuart Mill, whose approbation is the more to be valued because it is very sparingly and very discriminatingly bestowed. The eulogium has been previously alluded to, but I shall now quote the passage in full. Discussing the problem as to the speedy reparation of the capital of a country after any great catastrophe, —for example, the devastations of war,—Mill observes :

'So dangerous is the habit of thinking through

the medium of only one set of technical phrases, and so little reason have studious men to value themselves on being exempt from the very same mental infirmities which beset the vulgar, that this simple explanation was never given (so far as I am aware) by any political economist before Dr. Chalmers—a writer, many of whose opinions I think erroneous, but who has always the merit of studying phenomena at first hand, and expressing them in a language of his own, which often uncovers aspects of the truth that the received phraseologies only tend to hide.'

Chalmers had been struck, as every thoughtful man has been, with the theory of Malthus, which was first promulgated in 1798, but more completely developed in 1803; and the special attention which he had paid to the history, the evils, and the means for arresting pauperism, had confirmed him in attaching the most vital importance to these warnings on the dangers of a redundant population. That theory has nowhere been more briefly and emphatically put than in the following sentence of Professor Fawcett:—'It is quite evident that population must be restrained by some checks; for if all

married when they arrived at maturity, this earth would not merely fail to feed, but would scarcely even offer standing-room for the countless millions that might be born!' Again: 'If . . . wages do not rise when the wealth and capital of the country increase, it is solely and entirely because an increase of population causes a greater supply of labour. The labourers cannot fully participate in the advantages of a growing national prosperity unless population is, in some way or other, restrained.' According to Malthus, there are positive checks, such as the mortality arising from famine, disease, or the ravages of war. But there is also the preventive check, where the great majority of a people are restrained from early marriages by feelings of prudence. Although many call in question the alleged dangers, or doubt whether it will ever come to be of any practical consequence; yet the abstract truth of the law of population is in itself universally admitted. 'Twenty or thirty years ago,' says Stuart Mill, 'these propositions might still have required considerable enforcement and illustration; but the evidence of them is so ample and incontestable that they have

made their way against all kinds of opposition, and may now be regarded as axiomatic.'

Chalmers, as was usual with him, seized hold of this central idea, and made it the hinge, to use Robert Hall's expression, by which he fastened his whole economic doctrines and precepts. What was a thesis with Malthus was a mission to Chalmers; and he threw into the inculcation of it the whole intensity of his mind. He thus depicts the irresistible law of population:—'All agricultural and all commercial expedients for the enlargement of human maintenance have a necessary limit, beyond which, if the number of human beings overpass, or on which, if this number, with its powers and tendencies of indefinite augmentation, press inconveniently, the inevitable effect must be a general destitution and discomfort throughout the mass of society.' He prescribes the preventive remedy:—'The more we elevate man into a reflective being, and inspire him with self-respect, and give him a demand for larger and more refined accommodations, and, in one word, raise his standard of enjoyment, the more will the important step of marriage become a matter

of deliberation and delay.' Hence the priceless value of *education* to the labouring classes, not merely for the improvement of their minds, but for their preservation from indigence, woe, and wretchedness. 'The change will be accomplished surely, though indirectly and by insensible progress, through the means of general instruction, or by the spread of common, and, more especially, of sound Christian education over the country. . . . We object not to the highest possible education of the peasantry; yet it is not to the lessons of the political, but to those of the moral and religious school, that we look for the best and speediest instruments of their economic wellbeing.' He illustrates the possibility of such habits of prudence and self-restraint becoming general, by the example of the Scottish peasantry of former times. 'It is thus that, half a century ago, in the lowlands of Scotland, the habit of a large preparation often required for its accomplishment the delay of years, after the virtuous attachment was formed. This habit was nearly universal among our well-schooled and well-ordered families. And so, though poverty was not unknown, yet pauper-

ism was unknown ; and notwithstanding the general barrenness of our soil, did the moral prevail over the physical causes, and uphold within our borders an erect and independent peasantry.' He presses upon the labouring classes how, by the due exercise of self-restraint, they have the labour market absolutely under their own power. 'They are on high vantage-ground, if they but knew it ; and it is the fondest wish of every enlightened philanthropist that they should avail themselves to the uttermost of the position which they occupy. It is at the bidding of their collective will what the remuneration of labour shall be ; for they have entire and absolute command over the supply of labour. If they will, by their rash and blindfold marriages, over-people the land, all the devices of human benevolence and wisdom cannot ward off from them the miseries of an oppressed and straitened condition. There is no possible help for them if they will not help themselves.' He passes in review almost all the economic, political, and social nostrums for remedying the distress and improving the condition of the labouring class. He rejects some of them as

futile and mischievous, all as abortive, unless conjoined with a prudential conduct on their own part, which will keep within requisite limits the numbers of the population, born only to compete for labour with their own fathers and brothers and neighbours. 'The scheme of home colonization, and the various proposals of employment for the people, and the capabilities of increasing capital for their maintenance, and the openings of foreign trade, and the relief that might be conceived to ensue from the abolition of taxes, and an indefinite harbourage for our increasing numbers in an extended system of emigration, and, finally, a compulsory provision for the indigent,—all these pass in successive review before us. . . . Though all should be tried, yet all will be found wanting. . . . The sufficiency of the people's means will at length be reached through the medium of the people's intelligence and the people's worth. . . . A thorough education of principle throughout the land, though the only, yet is the sure high road to the economic wellbeing of the community at large.'

To the demonstration of these various pro-

positions he devotes the whole of his work on *Political Economy*. He takes up the proposed remedies one by one, and, in his usual minute and reiterating method, exposes either their total falsity, or their inefficiency in the face of an ever unrestrained population. His peculiar views on some of these subjects—such as capital, foreign trade, taxation, and primogeniture—may be open to question ; but the ruling conclusion to which he perpetually recurs will scarcely be disputed,—that any relieving or beneficial effect from these remedies will always be defeated, if the relief be immediately filled up again, and the benefits be immediately consumed, by the locust swarms of population incessantly starting up as any new resources are opened to the world. The imminence of these conclusions is sometimes denied ; they are staved off as the concern of far future generations ; or, where the danger is admitted, some vague unreasoned hypothesis is often suggested, that, long before the evil day comes round, nature, or the course of events, will furnish an antidote, which at present can neither be foreseen nor conceived. But no one of any authority now denies their truth

and seriousness as matter of logical argument and as matter of natural fact, unless some unprecedented change intervene in the resources of the earth or in the constitution of man. The most advanced and rigidly logical of our economists, Stuart Mill, with all his wide hopefulness for the working class, is as express and unqualified and exigent as Chalmers.

'The doctrine, that to however distant a time incessant struggling may put off our doom, the progress of society must "end in shallows and in miseries," far from being, as many people still believe, a wicked invention of Mr. Malthus, was either expressly or tacitly affirmed by his most distinguished predecessors, and can only be successfully combated on his principles. . . . It is but rarely that improvements in the condition of the labouring classes do anything more than give a temporary margin, speedily filled up by an increase of their numbers. . . . Unless, either by their general improvement in intellectual and moral culture, or at least by raising their habitual standard of comfortable living, they can be taught to make a better use of favourable circumstances, nothing permanent

can be done for them: the most promising schemes end only in having a more numerous, but not a happier people. . . . It appears to me impossible but that the increase of intelligence, of education, and of the love of independence among the working classes, must be attended with a corresponding growth of the good sense which manifests itself in provident habits of conduct; and that population, therefore, will have a gradually diminishing ratio to capital and employment.'

We have presented a faint outline of his *Political Economy;* to be fully appreciated, his doctrines must be studied with care in the work itself. We cannot venture, within our present space, nor do we pretend to have the ability, to pronounce on such grave and complicated questions, where it is better to be silent, than to multiply misunderstandings and dissensions by vague, flippant, ill-considered sentences, merely to round off a chapter. 'How to deal with our labouring classes,—or rather, as it looks to me, how they will deal with themselves and all other classes,'—is the awful enigma of the age—hanging dark, and close,

and thunder-charged over Britain, indeed over the whole world, wherever production is, and a strúggle for its division. The solution is not yet. The secret is with God: some great mind may be preparing to reveal it. *Check of population* may be one stepping-stone; it has long been a relief for the upper, the educated, the careful middle classes; why also should not the labourers bethink themselves, and bow to the necessary law, nor selfishly multiply existences merely for sickness and suffering and want, a cruel premature death, or a crueller lingering life? Their brethren have done it in old Scotland—do it still in Norway, and sundry other countries. But we shudder at the same time to think of certain alternatives connected with this forcible abstaining from marriage, which Chalmers has shrunk from discussing, and we must all for the present shrink from. There must surely be some *purer*, loftier solution yet awaiting us than this—the ossification of the youthful heart—the murder of lawful love. I turn from the mystery, having no present call to pursue it. I cannot solve it; then why hang over it in despair? I drop the curtain with

the sentiment which Chalmers himself has uttered at the close of the preface to his work: —'May God of His infinite mercy grant, that whatever the coming changes in the state and history of this nation may be, they shall not be the result of a sweeping and headlong anarchy; but rather, in the pacific march of improvement, may they anticipate this tremendous evil, and avert it from our borders!'

XVII.

HOME HEATHENISM.

CHALMERS, in 1833–4, was residing in Forres Street, Edinburgh, not far from the line of the Great North Road by Queensferry. In his walks out to the country in that direction, he would often cross the lofty and spacious Dean Bridge, then newly erected,—the latest wonder in Edinburgh,—spanning the ravine through which, far below, foams the Water of Leith, turbid and brawling, and laden with pollution. From this elevation he would look down upon the village of the Water of Leith, — almost sunk out of sight and sound of the world, though within a few hundred paces of the metropolis, — antiquated and decayed; cooped within steep narrow precipices; with tall gaunt chimneys, untenanted

and crumbling granaries, rough dirty streets, miserable hovels into which 'every element of heaven may enter;' with scarce any sign of life or action, except two or three lounging figures, the noise and froth of mill-wheels, the grunting of pigs, and the squalling of children without childhood. This abject and neglected place had made itself very notorious, in the late visitation of cholera, by its extreme ignorance and violence. Yet in many ways it had a quaint, old-fashioned, half-savage charm. To the antiquarian, this village was a curious relic of the past, lying close to, yet with a kind of repulsion hiding itself from, the encroaching pomp of the New Town of Edinburgh. To the painter or poet it had strange bits of ancient masonwork; and it had frothing pools, and steep banks clustered all over with wild vegetation, and aspects of a rude primitive life. Chalmers was not insensible to the associations of the past; for, was he not born and brought up amongst the old decayed towns of the East of Fife? He had also the artist's eye for quaint and out-of-the-way nooks, either of nature or of human habitation. But these lighter moods,

though neither scorned nor abjured, were in his mind always subordinated to the sentiment of Christian benevolence. Looking, then, from the height of the Dean Bridge, he might feel, 'How antique! how it carries one back to the time when Mary Stuart rode her palfrey across that now toppling old bridge in her excursions to the Highlands!' Or, 'How quaint and picturesque these straggling houses, in the deep ravine, with the babbling brook running through the midst!' But his uppermost feeling would be, 'What a spot, as if scooped out by nature, and thrown aside by man, to plant a *Territorial Church*, with all its reclaiming and purifying influences!'

And in the Water of Leith he resolved to show to the world a new model of that Territorial system, which he had begun in St. John's of Glasgow.

On a survey, it was found that the inhabitants were 1356 in number, but of these only 143 had sittings in any place of worship. There was a meeting-house of some denomination in or near the village, but only five of the in-

habitants had sittings; it was attended almost entirely by persons coming from a distance, outside the territory of the Water of Leith. Chalmers, assisted by the liberal friends who never failed him, determined to raise here a territorial church, specially devoted to the inhabitants of the Water of Leith. A missionary began his labours amongst them in 1833. He visited from house to house, made the acquaintance of the people, was courteously received by them, conversed with them, visited the sick, was with them in the hour of affliction and death, was their daily counsellor and friend. He invited them to come to meetings, where he addressed them—in fact, preached to them. His audience became more and more numerous; he had to seek out places of meeting larger and larger; at last he resorted to an old malt-granary, where, with great packing, some 400 people could attend. A church was then erected by subscription, which was opened in May 1836. The sittings were about 1000, and at a moderate charge, and offered in preference to the inhabitants. Soon after the opening, about 700 of the sittings were taken, and

almost entirely by inhabitants. It was a true *territorial* church.

Chalmers officiated at the opening, and dwelt paternally upon the effect of its territorial character.

'Instead of leaving this church to fill as it may from all parts of the town, we first hold out the seats that we have to dispose of, at such prices as we can afford, to its own parish families. . . . Our fond wish for Edinburgh and its environs is that, district after district, new churches may arise, and old ones be thrown open to their own parish families, till not one house remains which has not within its walls some stated worshipper in one or other of our Christian assemblies; and not one individual can be pointed to, however humble and unknown, who has not some man of God for his personal acquaintance, some Christian minister for his counsellor and friend.'

This new and eminently successful model of Territorialism, coupled with his long teachings, the private exertions at the very same time of his old Glasgow friends, and also the religious

darkness and fearful profligacy especially of the large towns, were at length stirring the Church of Scotland from its culpable neglect. The General Assembly in 1834 appointed a Church Extension Committee, and placed Chalmers at its head as convener. He was now clothed with an official status; and with undiminished, nay, with reanimated vigour, he prepared to carry this, probably his latest effort, to the height of a *national* concern; to pour the light of religion and knowledge, of industry and independent feeling, into the remotest and most degraded corners of Scotland.

But to appreciate thoroughly his views and motives in this work of Extension, let us now recapitulate distinctly what were his fixed tenets on the purposes and uses of an Establishment; its constitution; the terms on which the State has sought its alliance; and its perfect self-governing power within the whole province of its doctrine, discipline, and ministrations. In these tenets the Evangelical majority, which now filled the Established Church, most earnestly agreed with him.

He believed then, in theory, that there was

nothing unscriptural, nothing wrong in any way, but, on the contrary, that it was most salutary, and in accordance with Scripture, that the State, for the religious instruction and moral improvement of its people, should engage the services of the Church—that is, of a given organized body of men maintaining a system of Christian doctrine, with some form of government over their own ministers and members. Civilly and politically they are the subjects of the State; but ecclesiastically, in their Church organization, they rule and govern themselves apart from the State. The State might in this sense form a connection with the Church, establish it by law, and make over to it certain endowments for the support of its clergy, and the efficient performance of its functions as the National Church. But the union must be honestly for the religious instruction and moral improvement of the people, not for any sinister purpose, such as the mere pensioning of State minions and hangers-on of the aristocracy, or the corrupting of the minds of the people through the distilments of a paid clergy. Therefore, in its establishment, the Church

must not be made a tool to be used by the governing party in the State, or be turned by a hair's-breadth from its true spiritual tendencies. His theory was the reverse of that of the Erastian jurists, to whom the Church is the mere creature of Downing Street. The Downing Street theory was never more nakedly propounded than in a speech lately delivered by the present Attorney-General (Collier), 'before the clergy and some of the laity of the city of London,' says the report in the *Times* of the 5th February, 1870. 'He said,' continues the report, 'he fearlessly confessed that he knew nothing of theology; but he repeatedly insisted that the Established Church was a political institution, established, created, and protected by law. . . . The Church of England was a temporal institution, absolutely dependent upon Parliament. It was a provision made by Parliament for carrying throughout the country religious teaching; but what kind of religious teaching, was settled for us by Parliament.' That is to say, the Established Church is a mere bureau of the State—the State in a surplice preaching to the State in a plain coat. A very edifying spectacle truly!

This is what the Voluntaries have always alleged; and they will be very grateful for such an unqualified opinion from such a great man as an attorney-general, without payment of a fee. I believe it is the hard, unmystified fact; but this opinion coming from such a quarter must be a terrible disenchantment to those who, as was the case with Chalmers, would fain elevate an Establishment in their imaginations—as the organ of a purely religious initiative—as an independent exposition of religious thought and duty both to Parliament and people. If—they contend—if a Christian Church is to be really of use to the people of a State, it must be the Church untampered with by the State itself, or any other foreign influence. If, for some politic reason, the Church cannot be established free, it had better not be established at all, but be simply left to work its way amongst the people spontaneously. If the intention be honest,—to evangelize and civilise the whole population,—the Christian Church, chosen for such a high end, should be left free in its doctrine, free in its government, free and untrammelled to work out its mission of Chris-

tianization and civilisation; not subject in its ecclesiastical arrangements to any of the civil courts of the State. If any collision should occur between them at any doubtful point, where it may be difficult to discriminate between the civil and the ecclesiastical, then the State should not stand back, and leave an unseemly battle to be fought out between the Church and the civil courts; the State should step in, through its government or legislature, treating the Church, not as a mere bureau, but honourably as a religious ally, and should seek to remove the difficulty by some amendment in the terms of the alliance. If conciliation were impossible—if the collision were irremediable—then the State might break the alliance, as being a political drawback instead of an advantage. It might disestablish, it should never dishonour or degrade the National Church.

If this was the theory which Chalmers maintained in relation to the terms of union between Church and State, then he also believed, *historically*, that the Church of Scotland had been received into union with the State expressly as a free, self-governing Church. She had always pro-

claimed aloud, in her confessions and standards, that she owned no head but Christ, speaking to her in His word and through the influences of His Spirit, and by the earthly medium of office-bearers lawfully chosen. She regulated all her affairs in doctrine, government, and discipline; and, amongst other matters of government and discipline, her councils had the sole control over the ordination of her ministers, and over the conditions on which alone such ordination would be granted. In exercise of this control, she had, in all ages—in the face of hostility, fraud, and persecution—insisted that no minister should, by force of patronage, or in any other way, *be intruded upon* any congregation against their clearly expressed will. As a test of acceptance by the congregation, she had lately (in the General Assembly of 1834) passed the Veto ordinance, that, if the majority of the male communicants should veto any presentee as unsuitable to them, he should be rejected by the Church courts—that is, they should refuse to ordain him on account of this veto by the people. If any formidable difficulty were to arise in the course of her self-government, the

Established Church was entitled to look to the State for rectification, and not be left to an endless, tormenting jangle with the civil courts. If a patron had rights of presentation, but the Church had ecclesiastical grounds to reject the presentee, the civil courts might dispose of the temporalities,—the stipend and properties,—but could use no compulsitor on the Church, to force her to ordain the presentee as one of her ministers in things spiritual. Further, he believed that the Church had the most ample inherent powers to extend her religious superintendence, especially amongst the very poor and destitute and degraded; to raise congregations amongst them; and to set apart and attach to these congregations particular territories, not for any civil effect (*quoad civilia*), but only for the spiritual recovery of an outcast population (*quoad sacra*).

It was with these undoubting beliefs that Chalmers now embarked upon the extension of the Church of Scotland—the raising of the City of God in every desolate corner of the realm. He believed that the Church could create and attach territories to the new chapels; that she could

bar the intrusion of unacceptable ministers upon her congregations; that she could promote the edification of the people against all external interference; that within her own domain she had constitutional privileges, which no civil court could invade, or, if invaded, the Government was bound, and would never refuse, to come to the rescue.

LOCALISM should now girdle the nation. From three to four hundred chapels, with attendant schools and other improving agencies, would break up every patch of home heathenism. He renewed his youth; he kindled even with intenser glow; it was not Glasgow now—it was not Edinburgh now—it was all Scotland that he was going to *localize*. Every 2000 of the population should have their own immediate centre, from which would emanate upon them all the blessings of the life religious and moral, social, family, and individual. He traversed the country from Solway to Dornoch; he exerted all his eloquence, all his influence, and with the old result—palace and cottage alike responded to Thomas Chalmers. By 1841 he had 222 of his new churches erected or erecting;

and had raised £306,000 to make little Kilmanies of every dark place in Scotland. In two or three years more he would have reached his number—from three to four hundred churches with their accompaniments; and he could then have rested in the blessed hope, that to what he had planted, and his fellow-labourers had watered, God in due time would give the increase.

What then stops him in the accomplishment of his beneficent plans? Does his courage or his vigour fail? Does the liberality of the people desert him as a summer brook? No! whilst his arm is yet lifted up,—whilst the sacred treasury is still overflowing,—he is suddenly arrested in his movements by a concourse of parties, who think to preserve the Church of Scotland as a *State machine*, by pulling out her springs and taking off her wheels.

XVIII.

DISESTABLISHMENT BEGUN.

THE Evangelicals within the Establishment had been swelling in numbers and importance, until, much to the chagrin of the Moderate party, they had now gained the preponderance. They were leavening the whole Church with their doctrines and sentiments; they were enlisting all the young and the active, all the benevolent and pious. It was they, not the Moderates, who sustained the brunt of the battle against Voluntaryism—who made a wall of their breasts in defence of the National Zion—who not only broke the first impetuosity of the Voluntary movement, but were fast bringing back again the tens of thousands of the expatriated, who, in the long previous years, had seceded from the Establish-

ment, not from want of love for her, but from the very excess of it, and because her own love in her Master's service had waxed cold. I testify this the more freely, because my youth was nurtured amid the traditions and opinions of the Voluntary Seceders, and in a certain feeling of umbrage against Chalmers and his Evangelicals; and all my prepossessions were, and are, opposed to the secular establishment of any religious denomination. But I must confess, from my own recollections of the time, the Church of Scotland was never so strong, never so firmly riveted in the hearts of the people of all classes, never so like going forth to conquer even within the borders of Secession, as she was in the years from 1833 to 1840. As Chalmers proclaimed to the fascinated princes, and bishops, and nobles, and statesmen of England, in his celebrated lectures of 1838: 'We appear for the families of our peasants and our artisans, and our men of handicraft and hard labour. *We are the tribunes of the people,* the representatives of that class to whom the law has given no other representatives of their own—of the unenfranchised multitude, who are

without a vote and without a voice in the House of Commons. Our sacred object is the moral wellbeing of that mighty host who swarm and overspread the ground-floor of the fabric of our commonwealth; and after the mists of prejudice and misconception have cleared away, our ultimate hope of success, under Heaven, is in the inherent and essential popularity of our cause!'

But as the Evangelicals were now extending the Church into every corner of the land, and making her again the Church of the people, they must also bring her more into accordance with the wishes and spirit of the people; that is, in short, they must give to the people some kind of efficient control in the appointment of their ministers. They were not prepared, were not inclined, even if they had the legal right, to abolish patronage altogether; they were not prepared, were not inclined, to give the direct vote to the congregations. But their chief advisers hit upon this expedient: to make it a rule or ordinance of the Church, that, on a presentation being made by the patron, if the majority of the male heads of families, being communicants, should disapprove of the

presentee, then this disapproval or *veto* should be an effectual bar to his ordination, and accordingly the presbytery of the district should refuse to admit or ordain him. This was the *Veto ordinance* passed by the General Assembly in 1834. Technically it is called the Veto Act, but I prefer calling it an *ordinance*, to distinguish it from an Act of Parliament. Chalmers himself, be it observed, with something of the timidity as well as foresight of the careful, practical administrator, was against going the length of the Veto ordinance; and when that was decided, he urged that they should obtain a concurrent Parliamentary sanction, that is, a confirmatory Act of Parliament, to prevent collision between the claims of the patron and this ordinance of the Church. He was overruled by such great constitutional lawyers as Lord Moncreiff, and he submitted; and afterwards he loyally fought the battle of Non-Intrusion on ground which he had not chosen, and to which he had strongly objected.

The Evangelicals, merely because they were Evangelicals, were already the objects of jealousy and dislike to the Moderates, and

to the ordinary men of the world; but this Veto ordinance—making the Church's act of ordination override the patron's act of presentation, in fact, asserting that the Church might refuse, and could not be compelled to ordain—drew down upon them the more potent wrath of the landocracy, who held the patronages, and of the English governing politicians, trained from their cradle in the fixed idea, that the Church, not merely in its civil relations, but also in its religious and disciplinary functions, should be directly and completely under the thumb of the State, that is, of any existing ministry and faction. Gradually then an understanding, a playing from hand to hand, commenced between Moderatism, landocracy, and Erastianism, either in some way or other to subdue these rampant Evangelicals, or to get their ringleaders ejected from the Church which they were disturbing.

Thus it was, briefly and generally, that Chalmers was stopped in building his City of God; that the Church of Scotland was *disrupted* in the very zenith of her strength and glory, and by those who vaunted themselves in their day as the pillars of Conservatism. Thus also

the other Establishments of Britain and Ireland, to whom that of Scotland was such a firm outlying buttress, were shaken to their fall—which some of them have since experienced, and others seem to be passively awaiting.

XIX.

NEW ERA OF FREE CHURCHES.

IT is not our intention to enter minutely into the questions of the Disruption. The incidents are so comparatively recent, and were so momentous and memorable, that there are few persons who have not a sufficient general acquaintance with them. But the real and cogent reason is that to which I have already had occasion to allude. My design has been to exhibit a continuous outline of the religious and social movements originated by Chalmers — to trace the aims and purposes of his life. But the Disruption was *no aim and purpose of his life*. It came upon him as the reversal, for the time, of all his aims and purposes. It does not therefore fall so directly within the scope of my

design. The Establishment was always the instrument he counted upon in the work of extension; it was the only effective platform for carrying out his parochial system; and the disruption of the Establishment, in his estimation, was the saddest of disasters,—a necessity, as he viewed it, but a heart-wringing necessity. He bore it valiantly and manfully. He would rather lose the Establishment than keep it, when bereft, as he believed, of all independence, all self-government, all power over its own ministrations, all guarantee for the spiritual teaching of the people. Never was his eloquence more Demosthenic than in the series of orations for the liberty of the Church. Never were his abilities as a governor of mankind more transcendent, than in the policy by which he bore his Free Church aloft through its first tremendous difficulties; landed it in a safe and well-provided haven; struck out a new ecclesiastical finance almost as steady and universal as an Establishment; and went forth in his old old age, at the head of his people, to found a new City of God. Never was he liker one of the ancient Fathers of the

Church. Never was he liker the mighty old Popes—the Leos and the Gregories—when the early Church of Rome was still a spiritual mother to the nations. Any man of historical reading must often have felt this resemblance: that he had all the better part of the *hierarch* in his soul, whose aim was to train the people to holy living through holy institutions. But his victories at the crisis of the Disruption were like the victories in a civil war, where the flag is flying over the battered citadels of one's own country; where the laurel is wreathed with the cypress. In words of deepest agony Chalmers bewailed 'the sore, bitter, crushing disappointment — the blasting of all my fondest hopes for the good and peace of our Church.'

But—to keep up the consistency of his life to his principles—we must explain, however shortly, how the Disruption came in his way, and arrested his grand triumphal march in the path of Territorial Extension.

We have seen that Chalmers valued an Established Church principally because it was the best instrument for the extension of the

parochial system into the unprovided parts of the country; whilst he maintained, on the other hand, that the *Scottish* Establishment at least, whatever might be the case with other Establishments, was under no slavery from its connection with the State, was as free in its action as any Voluntary denomination: for instance, had absolute power as to the ordination of its ministers, and could reject a patron's presentee if he were unacceptable to a congregation, even, as he had always maintained, without any assigned reason; and above all, had absolute power to extend its churches, and attach to them a defined territory out of any existing parish, for the purely spiritual superintendence of such territory by the ministers with their sessions.

But the tract of judicial decisions which precipitated the Disruption had entirely swept away the strengths in which he was confiding. The Civil Courts had now pronounced:—

That the Church cannot lawfully detach a new territory from an existing parish, and assign it to the spiritual charge of the minister and office-bearers of any extension chapel, or

give them right to their own church-door collections, for the management of their own pauperism, or for any other purpose, because such collections belong exclusively to the heritors of the parish in which such extension chapel is situated: That it was illegal to refuse ordination to a patron's presentee if he was qualified in literature and manners; that the Church could not lawfully refuse, on the ground that he was unsuitable and unacceptable to the people, and that they had recorded their veto against him; if she so refused, she was liable in damages, and could even be ordered by the civil courts to proceed to ordination: That the civil courts have the right to interdict ministers, duly authorized and instructed by the General Assembly, from preaching and administering the sacraments in certain boundaries; and if the interdict be broken, the ministers may be punished by fine or imprisonment.

We do not inquire whether these decisions were right or wrong, as interpretations of the law. Agrippa had spoken, and Cæsar declined to take up the appeal. The tribunals decided

against the Church, and the Government drew itself up in cold neutrality, and refused to interfere. But if such was the law of Scotland; if new territorial churches, with full power of management, could not be constituted; and if the Church courts were no better than hands to ordain, as a matter of course, the patron's presentee, if only qualified in literature and manners, however unsuitable; if they were utterly helpless to defend their congregations from intrusion; and if, at such an emergency, the Government would not step in to the rescue, — then the Establishment had lost its operative value to Chalmers. He could not carry out his territorial extensions; he could not grapple with pauperism; he had no guarantee for a popular and useful ministry, no assurance for the Christian instruction and social regeneration of the people.

'If the vindication of her outraged authority,' as he exclaimed in the last crisis of her fate, 'is indeed to be the precursor of her dissolution as a National Church; if—in the recent language of an offended nobleman within these walls—if this is to be the last knell of the

Presbyterian Establishment in Scotland,—only let the Legislature say so; and then let it be seen whether or not the Church of our fathers be prepared to abjure her connection with the State, rather than, bereft of all her respect, and so of all her usefulness, she will submit to be vilified into a thing of nought.'

By the summer of 1841 it was plain that Government would do nothing to extricate the confusion; they seemed rather to like the confusion, because this might be the means to get rid of the little knot of disturbers, as they considered them, who were too far committed to recede. The Moderates were throwing matters into chaos, by insubordination to the votes of the Evangelical majority; thinking that, by producing a dead-lock, they would force on a crisis, from which they as a party had nothing to apprehend, as their friends were all-prevailing at court. Then reports were flying amongst the common herd, who neither know nor believe in the possibility of self-sacrifice, that the agitators were losing heart, and would never take the leap.

Chalmers laid clear the situation in one of

his refulgent sentences. Thus spoke he before the Commission on the 25th of August :—

'As to the war of argument, that is now over; seeing the time has come when the strife of words must give place to the strife of opposing deeds and opposing purposes. . . . Be it known unto all men, then, that we have no wish for a disruption, but neither stand we in the overwhelming dread of it. We have no ambition, as has pleasantly been said of us, for martyrdom of any sort, but neither will we shrink from the hour or the day of trial. In short, let it be distinctly known, both over the country at large, and more especially in the camp of our adversaries, that whatever the misgivings might be in other quarters, amongst us there are no falterings, no fears. Should what has been termed the *crisis* arrive, we know of a clear and an honourable, and withal a Christian outgoing, confident in the smile of an approving Heaven from above; and that confidence not abated when we look around on the goodly spectacle of our friends and fellow-Christians — the best and worthiest of Scotland's sons — in readiness to hail and to

harbour the men who are willing to give up all for the sake of conscience and of Christian liberty. The God whom they serve will not leave them without help, or without a home.'

Faithful to his own words, he was now devoting himself to insure that 'help and home,' which, it was evident, would soon be required. His unshrinking fellow-soldiers were occupying themselves very little with the thought of the new quarters into which they might be driven. Their future provision entered little into their calculations. That is the testimony concerning them of all fair and dispassionate observers. Many of them were men of simple, unflickering faith, who thought not of the morrow, but, child-like, trusted in the God of yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Many of them, again, were men of magnanimity and enthusiasm, who in a good cause would face any morrow, however dark and dismal. But if his thick-encircling band of heroes were indifferent to the future, or were piously assured of it, Chalmers, from instinct and loyalty, felt it all the more his duty to conceive and execute, for their security, another of his bold financial

combinations. He was a man of faith, as much as the devoutest of them; he was a man of enthusiasm, as much as the fieriest of them; but he was also, by genius, a man fertile of invention and exhaustless in finance. All his life long he has been raising princely sums for his Church. Shall he fail her *now*, when she is to be turned out, naked and despoiled, from the altars which she has been defending from violation?

Foreseeing, then, in this summer of 1841, that Disruption was inevitable, he applied his mind to the first tracing out of a scheme by which the Church of Scotland, disestablished by the force of circumstances, could be carried over to the platform of a Free Church, without any essential loss or detriment, with its character, capabilities, and services unimpaired. A colossal attempt! never made before in the history of Secession,—to raise up the seceding body at once, to the height and magnitude of the true National Establishment. A scheme then must be devised, that should secure for the ministers, not uncertain, fluctuating stipends, but something like the fixity of endowments; that should

speedily cover the country with new churches; that should found and support an equal complement of schools; and that should hold out the ulterior prospect of extending churches and schools, and all religious, educational, and charitable instrumentalities, into all unprovided localities, whether in the large cities, or in the most lone and sequestered districts of the country.

He framed a brief Memorandum of provision, tracing out the main lines of such a scheme, so simple, that one is almost puzzled at the fame which it has acquired (like the egg of Columbus); yet so definite, exact, and complete, that when the crisis did finally arrive, it was at once adopted, and has ever since been adhered to. It has accomplished results at which even statesmen and the leaders of public opinion are astonished; and into which, with a view to eventful problems yet to be wrought out, they are minutely inquiring.

Certainly the groundwork of the scheme is simple; and the working of it has been as simple as it has been prolific.

First,—In every given district of the country,

let there be instituted a local or congregational association.

Second,—Let these associations collect donations and subscriptions.

Third,—Let these donations and subscriptions be periodically remitted to a Central Board in Edinburgh.

Fourth,—Let the Central Board set apart the *donations* into a Building Fund for churches.

Fifth,—Let the Board hold the *subscriptions* as a Sustentation Fund for the support of the ministry.

Sixth,—From the Sustentation Fund, let there be allocated to the several ministers an equal dividend or stipend, not to exceed an amount to be fixed by way of maximum.

Seventh,—Any surplus remaining after such distribution, shall be devoted to the objects of church and school extension throughout the country.

Eighth,—Congregations may increase the dividend stipends of their ministers, by supplementary contributions.

Ninth,—The ancient order of deacons shall be revived in each congregation, to take

charge of all funds committed to them, whether for the support of the ministry, the relief of the poor, or other congregational purposes.

This Memorandum was at first distributed tentatively as a private circular amongst a few tried and experienced friends. But the scheme was never in any way touched; it was accepted by the friends to whom it was shown as completely meeting the emergency, if it should arise; and, as we have said, it was ultimately adopted by the body, and was put into working gear by Chalmers himself when the Disruption came round, and created the necessity of taking measures of provision.

This financial scheme of support, communicated at first only to a few friends, was for a long time unknown to the general body of Evangelical ministers. They were going forward, maintaining their principles, and waging their warfare, so long as there was an inch of territory left to fight upon, without casting a thought upon their future fate. If a thought crossed their minds at all, it probably took this shape, that they would be supported as the

ministers of the previous Scottish Secessions had been, by voluntary stipends from their respective congregations. But, as we have already mentioned, there is the concurrent testimony of many observant and honourable persons, who knew them and mixed largely amongst them, that thought or care for the future was quite remarkably absent from their minds; and that such considerations had not the weight of a feather in swaying their judgments.

XX.

THE FIVE HUNDRED.

IN view of the clearly impending crisis, a special convocation of the Evangelical ministers assembled in Edinburgh—450 strong—in the month of November 1842. It was opened by Chalmers with a serene and luminous discourse, from these words of the Psalmist, 'Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness.' 'I speak in the hearing of men,' he said, 'firmly resolved as ever to lose all, and to suffer all, rather than surrender the birthright of those prerogatives which we inherit from our fathers, or compromise the sacred liberty wherewith Christ has made us free; of men whose paramount question is, What is duty? that best stepping-stone to the solution of the other question, What is wisdom?

For it is when in this spirit of uprightness, this blessed frame of simplicity and godly sincerity, that light is made to arise, and Wisdom is justified of her children.' But here again the Convocation assembled, not to lay plans for their future provision, but to deliberate solemnly upon the new position of the Church, in consequence of recent decisions of the Court of Session, and of the failure of all attempts hitherto made at legislation. They met to consider, not, 'Where are our stipends to come from?' but, 'What are the exact principles which must determine whether we can remain within, or must withdraw from, the endowed Church,—that is, retain our stipends, or throw them to the winds, whatever be the consequences?' They agreed in this resolution:—'That as the principle involved in these decisions . . . is that of the supremacy of the Civil Courts over those of the Established Church in the exercise of their spiritual functions, so the members of the Convocation declare, that no measure can in conscience be submitted to, which does not effectually protect the Church against the exercise of such jurisdiction of the

Civil Courts in time to come.' Chalmers was distressed at their apathy regarding the future means of provision. They were giving no thought to this subject at all. He sought permission, therefore, to expound to them his scheme of *Sustentation*, which the body, both ministers and laymen, were now to hear for the first time. It had hitherto reposed in his own breast, and amongst the few to whom the short Memorandum had been imparted. He now expounded it in the fullest details, through the whole modes of working; and even pledged himself to numerical results, and to the certainty and sufficiency of the revenue, both for ministerial support and for territorial extension. He dilated upon it with his usual intense realism, with an assurance as if he were explaining the history of some existing and well-wrought institution, not holding out only a vision of the future. The four hundred and fifty listened with admiration, as they would do to anything that fell from the eloquent lips of Chalmers. They respected his motives; they appreciated his heart-warm anxiety for the welfare of themselves and their households, and for the up-

holding of the sanctuary; but even those most attached to him, and who were quite satisfied of his financial ability, listened as to an imaginative project—fair and ingenious to look at, but too ideal, too complicated and delicate, to be reduced into practice. His Biographer, who was in the midst of affairs, assures us, 'that not ten out of the four hundred ministers to whom it originally was broached had much, if any, faith in its success; nor was there one, perhaps, whose decision upon the great question of duty then before them it served in any appreciable degree to sway. It was listened to with general incredulity; and the prospects held out by it were regarded as the visionary anticipations of a too sanguine imagination.'

Chalmers, in a speech next year, reverted to the general smile, at once of disbelief and amusement, with which his scheme was at first received. 'Though I am not a professor of physiognomy, when I chanced to lift my eyes off the paper to the countenances of those who were before me, I observed in them a good-natured leer of incredulity, mixed up, no doubt, with a benignant complacency,

which they cast on the statements and high-coloured representations of a very sanguine Utopian.'

The Convocation, with many polite acknowledgments, passed away from any discussion on the scheme—passed to the previous question, so to speak, and simply put upon record—what was their true feeling—this act of faith in the fatherhood of God:—'It is the determination of the brethren now assembled, if no measure such as they have declared to be indispensable be granted, to tender the resignation of their civil advantages, which they can no longer hold in consistency with the free and full exercise of their spiritual functions, and to cast themselves on such provision as God in His providence may afford.'

Such then are their protestations; but—'*Will* they come out?'

The honest, sensible Moderates, who have always shown a due respect for things that have a solid value, believe the Evangelicals will think twice before they give up their comfortable manses and well-paid stipends. 'I should like to know,' said douce Dr. Grant, 'how

many of our opponents are to leave us.' The Trimmers, forty in number, most irreverently dubbed the 'Forty Thieves,' who, so long as it was talk only, had been fluttering between pence and popularity, have now nestled down ignominiously to pence, amid general laughter, and are doing what they can to break up the Evangelical party, and bring them into the same discredit and contempt with themselves. The men of the Clubs, tired of yawning into Princes Street, have got up a mild form of sensation by laying bets on the result—the odds, as might be expected, being hollow against faith and heroism. The representatives of wig-wisdom in Edinburgh are assuring the Government,—'Mark my words, not forty of them will go out.' '*Forty!*' cries Prophet John Cumming from his tripod in Crown Court, London, always so lucky in his predictions, 'I am not satisfied *that any will secede!*' Sir George Sinclair of Ulbster, on the contrary, a man himself of faith and enthusiasm, and therefore capable of understanding them in others, warned the Government only a month before the approaching Assembly, that almost all the

450 who had attended the Convocation would secede; and he added, 'You have no doubt heard of the Highland chief who, when desired to occupy an inferior place at the festive board, exclaimed, "Wherever Macdonald sits, that is the head of the table." With still greater truth may it be said on this occasion, "Wherever Thomas Chalmers is, there is the Church of Scotland."'

Who can tell? There may be a pitiful failure of performance, after all these solemn convocations, all these vigorous protestations. The world thinks so, and the world is too often correct in its low estimate of human virtue. The higher emotions of the spirit are as blinks of the sun in a wintry day; the temptations of the flesh are ever present, ever seductive, and fall in so smoothly with our natural selfishness and love of ease. To break with the habits of centuries, to disturb long-settled associations, to leave all earthly possessions for an extreme proposition—'tis hard, 'tis hard, and sore against the flesh.

'Weak and irresolute is man:
The purpose of to-day,

Woven with pains into his plan,
To-morrow rends away.'

To-morrow we shall see!

It was Thursday, the 18th day of May 1843—(I gather my information from various contemporary witnesses, and partly from my own impressions, for I was in Edinburgh at the time, although pinned all day to my desk; but the sounds of the Disruption came in upon me, as wave broke after wave). The morning rose dull and cloudy; but as the day advanced, it became clearer and more settled. For several days previously there had been an unusual influx of strangers into Edinburgh,—some drawn by curiosity, but tens of thousands from profound sympathy, and the exultation to behold a sublime spectacle. By four in the morning, numbers had taken their seats in St. Andrew's Church of the New Town, in which the business of the Assembly would be transacted, where they sat in expectation for upwards of nine hours. A still greater number had taken their seats, as early, in the large hall of the Canonmills, an extensive pile on the north side of the town, down by the Water of Leith, where

preparations had been made for the reception of the New Assembly on their withdrawal—for the formal inauguration of the Free Church of Scotland. Long before the middle of the day all ordinary business was suspended. Edinburgh itself, with its stern and sturdy burghers —its lawyers and logicians, at least half divided in opinion, always more bent upon first principles than upon traditional commonplaces —its accomplished and high-spirited women, always on the van of thought, never shrinking in conventional silliness when it is woman's work to act in the cause of liberty or benevolence,—Edinburgh itself, we say, was one of the chief centres of propagandism, if not the chief, for the *Free* movement; so that hundreds of the best citizens had early left their homes, and in various directions were busily engaged in one department or other of the preliminary arrangements, either from official duty, or to aid and animate their brethren. The usual dense but eddying crowds were to be seen at the various points where there was any cause of interest or attraction. Even the cynics, who kept aloof at first with airs of superior wisdom

—who cared not a jot, not they, what a pack of fanatics would do—who stuck all forenoon to their rooms or their desks with quite unprecedented industry,—even they, as the hour approached, were sensible of the magnetic current; they rose and looked out, and hearkened, and hankered, then fairly yielded at last to the universal impulse, took their hats, and hurried to the streets with the curiosities and pulsations of ordinary mortals. Those who were walking about say there was little levity, almost no mockery, but the aspect and conversation of the people were generally grave and thoughtful and deeply interested.

The Marquis of Bute, Royal Commissioner, and grand signior, was keeping state at Holyrood. Troops of cavalry, mounted on their proud coursers, and glittering in armour, with banner and trumpet—all the mimicry of outward pomp and force—were circling round the palace. Carriages and equipages were rolling down; richly caparisoned steeds with their lordly riders. By mid-day the long spacious Chamber of State was filled with a splendour such as old Holyrood does not often now

exhibit,—the representative of royalty, the highest of the nobility, ermined judges, star-bespangled warriors, and the dark array of the clergy *still national;* the whole scene adorned with cheeks as fair, and eyes as bright, and smiles as gay, as if the court of Mary Stuart were revived. But the air was electrical for all that; any turn of the wind might puff its black cloud; passions are all the more intense when repressed under the show of easy nonchalance. This Chamber of State is hung with the so-called portraits of the Scottish kings, from Fergus downwards; amongst the rest is one, somewhat tolerable, of William of the 'glorious Revolution.' The Royal Commissioner was standing opposite, in a circle of all that was outwardly august, and imposing, and venerable in the nation—surely it was the very marriage-day of Church and State!—when this picture of King William, accidentally unfastened, broke away from the wall, and came down with hollow sound upon the floor. A voice like Cassandra's proclaimed—'There goes the Revolution settlement!'

Marshal the carriage of State, ye equeries,

with the eight gorgeously plumed steeds, and the scarlet-shining riders! Sound the trumpets! beat the drums! form and ride forth with a clatter, O British cavalry! Nobles, judges, magistrates, march in your long lines up the crowded streets, and descend for solemn worship at old St. Giles. Then, service over, renew your martial music, renew the march, down the High Street, along the North Bridge, and halt the procession at the gates of St. Andrew's.

The ever-increasing multitude, who have been floating about the town all day in different quarters, now gather and concentrate near this church, and await the birth of events. The galleries are crammed with the nine-hours' occupants; the back seats below are now filled; and the ministers and elders pour in hastily, till every seat in the body of the church holds its man.

Welsh, always calm and dignified, enters and takes his Moderator's chair; Chalmers on his left. The Commissioner next appears, and fills his chair of state. After the opening devotions, and after the great assemblage had resumed their seats, there was a bending forward, and a universal cry of 'Hush! hush!'

which would have drowned the voice of a Stentor. The first confused hubbub died away into a silence like that of the sepulchre.

'Fathers and brethren!' Welsh began, and every accent circulated through the breathless assembly.

After some words of preface and explanation, he thus concluded: 'We protest that . . . it is and shall be lawful for us . . . to withdraw to a separate place of meeting, for the purpose of taking steps . . . for separating in an orderly way from the Establishment. . . . And we now withdraw accordingly, humbly and solemnly acknowledging the hand of the Lord in the things which have come upon us, because of our manifold sins, and the sins of the Church and nation.'

He bowed to the Commissioner, left his seat, and walked down the aisle. Chalmers, who had been standing at his side with an air of abstraction, now seized his hat and followed him with hasty strides, as if impatient to be gone. Other venerable fathers—Gordon, Macdonald, Macfarlane—rose and departed. The people in the galleries, spell-bound at first, broke out into one rapturous shout, which,

however, the serious feeling of the assemblage speedily quelled. Then minister after minister passed away—elder after elder—seat after seat was left empty. More than 400 ministers (it was soon afterwards increased to 500)—a still larger number of the elderhood—forsook, what they now pitied and scorned as the ENSLAVED CHURCH.

The one great shout inside is the warning to the multitudes outside; and as the well-known faces appear under the pillars in front, the cry reverberates through the streets—'They come! they come!' One loud ringing cheer after another hails the twenties, and then the fifties, and then the hundred, and then the hundred after hundred. A voice from St. Andrew's Church sounds over all Scotland—'CONSCIENCE IS KING!'

They came out in no regular order; but the dense multitudes gathering and forming a narrow lane, they were forced into an unintended procession of three and three, a quarter of a mile in length; and through the crowded streets, and under the crowded windows, they made their way to the hall of Canonmills.

In a quiet room in another part of the city, Lord Jeffrey was sitting and reading his book. A friend burst in upon him: 'What do you think? more than 400 are out!' Flinging the book across the room, and springing to his feet, Jeffrey exclaimed, with an enthusiasm and patriotic ardour which his trained nature would seldom permit: 'I'm proud of my country; there is not another country upon earth where such a deed could have been done!'

Now they fill their new assembly in the Canonmills. Amid acclamations, continued for several minutes, Chalmers takes the chair. He calls them to join in the psalm—

> 'O send Thy light forth and Thy truth;
> Let them be guides to me,
> And bring me to Thine holy hill,
> Ev'n where Thy dwellings be.'

As the 3000 voices swell through the building, a ray of sunshine—rare on that cloudy day—suddenly breaks in and irradiates the assembly. Many present remembered the text of Chalmers six months before: 'Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness.'

'Reverend fathers and brethren!' said Chal-

mers, in opening the Free Assembly, 'it is well that you should have been strengthened by your Master in heaven to make the surrender you have done of everything that is dear to nature, casting aside all your earthly dependence, rather than offend conscience. . . . It is well that you have made for the present a clean escape from this condemnation; and that, in the issue of the contest between a sacrifice of principle and a sacrifice of your worldly possessions, you have resolved upon the latter; while to the eye of sense you are without a provision and a home, embarked upon a wide ocean of uncertainty, save that great and generous certainty which is apprehended by the eye of faith—that God reigneth, and that He will not forsake the families of the faithful!'

XXI.

THE FREE CHURCH ORGANIZED.

THIS disruption—this abandonment of their means of living by 500 ministers, with the adherence of a large proportion of the elderhood, and of at least one-third of the population—the middle class very generally, and the more intelligent of the peasantry almost entire—for the high and somewhat metaphysical principle that they could no longer preserve the ordinances of religion free and intact from foreign secular interference,—this disruption in the Church of Scotland, we say, took every one by surprise. Whether to the credit or the discredit of Scotland—whether a thing to be admired or a thing to be laughed at—whether the step was sublime or ridiculous—the exclamation of Jeffrey was probably correct: 'There

is not another country upon earth where such a deed could have been done.' No people are fonder or more saving of their money than the Scots: none will spend or sacrifice it more readily when there is a cause which stirs their souls. This they have proved over and over again in their history. Their parsimony and their magnanimity are equally unrivalled; and when they really feel, they unreservedly act. To the mere worldly-minded, and the mere men of fine thin literature, the Disruption was, is, and ever shall be, to the world's end, a mystery inexplicable, but a mystery so silly and stupid as not to be worth inquiring into. Explain it to them as you will from the standpoint of the men who made the sacrifice (which is the only just way to understand any act), the cuckoo answer is always the same: 'We can make nothing of it; it seems all a shadow.' Yes, and must ever be so with *you;* let us therefore hold the subject to be definitively closed. The Peel Government were shocked at the catastrophe, foresaw the disasters which must follow, felt that they had been misled by their informants; but their informants had themselves been mis-

led by the littleness of their own minds, and the gossip of dinner-tables. The Moderate leaders —able, sincere, fighting like honest men, but too worldly in their estimates—saw with surprise, but also, I believe, with the deepest regret, the departure of so many hundreds of their noble foemen. The Forty Trimmers, who expected to step into the lead which the Evangelicals had abandoned, were surprised to find themselves quietly extinguished, reduced to a nullity in the Church courts; for these small mincing men had no chance in the struggle for existence with hardy plants like the vigorous James Robertson and the quick-witted Robert Lee. Those Presbyterian mummies—the grey-headed licentiates, who had been lying dead, as in their coffins, to all occupation for the last twenty years—found themselves, to their surprise and delight, in the hurry of filling up vacant charges, installed, all of a sudden, in the churches and manses and stipends which the fanatics had so obligingly left as a spoil for the camp-followers. The other Seceders of Scotland, having their own histories of sacrifice and exertion, were less surprised than the various conventional

classes. But the numbers exceeded even their anticipations; and, forgetting old strifes, they held out, to this last great contingent, the hand of fellowship, which is like, ere long, to be the bond of unity. Finally, the ministers who came out were themselves surprised at the largeness of the host, and the unanimity and generosity with which they were followed.

But amid the general surprise, there was one man who felt none. Chalmers was perhaps surprised at the numbers, but he was not surprised at the copiousness of the supplies which were pouring in upon him. He sat, diligent, steady, and alert, at the door of the exchequer, true to his own watchword, 'Organize, organize, organize!' He knew the pulse of his country; he knew how many princely donors there were; he knew what would be the proceeds of the 'accumulation of littles;' he could count on his revenues to a penny. He felt no surprise as the hundreds of thousands were rolling in for the support of the men who had made the sacrifice, without having the least definite prospect where their sustenance was to come from. Starting up at length, he gave the signal to Scotland (in

the motto to his circulars)—'The God of heaven, He will prosper us; therefore we, His servants, *will arise and build!*'

In his *Horæ Sabbaticæ*, being his meditations and prayers in his Sunday reading of the Scriptures, begun in 1841, his most secret desires, in entering upon his novel and arduous task, are disclosed:—

'O heavenly Father,' he implores, 'do Thou open more and more the hearts and hands of the Church's friends, that it may be adequately supported for the great end of providing the lessons of Thy blessed Gospel to all the families of Scotland. . . . Thou knowest, O Lord, my conflicts and difficulties and fears. To Thee I would flee for refuge, and implore Thy blessed guidance throughout the remainder of my work in connection with the Free Church of Scotland. Enable me to clear my way aright among the opposing elements, and to trace a path in skilfulness and with safety through the labyrinth of misconceptions which are on every side of me. And let me never forget that, however essential her outward business might be, *her strength lies in her spirituality.*'

Leaving the routine of public discussions, and the conduct of executive affairs, as well as foreign missions, and the various miscellaneous objects of the Free Church, to the younger ministers, and even more largely to the committees of lay members, numbering amongst them some of the most esteemed gentlemen and of the ablest business men in Scotland, Chalmers concentrated the whole time and attention which he could spare from his classes and other avocations, on that which, humanly speaking, was the keystone of the whole arch—the consolidating and fixing of the *Sustentation Fund.* He had no confidence in impulses; they must be confirmed into habits, and habits must be moulded into institutions; but from his experience he had unbounded confidence in the liberality of Christian zeal, when it was once organized and methodically directed. Of the 1200 ministers of the Establishment, 500 had come out. Chalmers calculated that for adequate sustentation there was required a yearly revenue of £100,000; and the very first year the central and supplementary funds together yielded about £150,000. The

central fund alone allowed a minimum equal dividend of £105. In the same time 500 churches had been erected, out of the central and the local building funds. In the year 1843–4, the central building fund amounted to £85,300; the local building fund, in 1843, to £142,000; in 1844, to £100,000. The existing ministry being decently provided for, and the first required number of churches being erected, Chalmers could now resume the paramount mission of his life,—that of carrying his local institutions—church and school and pastoral superintendence—into every corner of the land. He thus addressed the Free Assembly at their meeting in May 1844:—

'If we do what we might and what we ought, we will not only be able to repair the whole *Disruption*, but will get landed in the great and glorious work of *Church extension*. . . . This will open a boundless field for the liberality of our Christian brethren—a bright and beautiful ulterior, to which every eye should be directed, that . . . every heart may be elevated by the magnificent aim, to cover with the requisite number of churches, and, with God's blessing on

the means, to educate, and, in return for our performance and prayers, to Christianize the whole of Scotland.'

I cannot pursue the subject into further details. I can only throw the main financial facts into a rapid summary. They read more like the figures of the Imperial exchequer than the account of the revenues of a single denomination in the smallest member of the United Kingdom.

The number of ministers that came out in 1843 was about 500; in 1868, the Free Church ministry was 950.

Within the same period—twenty-five years—there have been erected 900 churches, 650 manses, 600 schools, 3 colleges, a noble Assembly Hall, and an extensive and valuable library has been instituted.

The central and local building funds have together raised £1,605,000.

The value of property and other assets belonging to the body is £2,000,000.

The yearly revenue for all purposes, which in 1863 was £343,000, in 1868 was £421,000.

The Sustentation Fund, in particular, which in 1844 was £146,000, in 1868 was £265,600.

Although the ministry have nearly doubled, the equal dividend, which in 1844 was £105, in 1868 was £150; and it is now determined that the minimum shall be raised to £200. Besides, 600 of the ministers, nearly two-thirds, receive supplementary contributions from their congregations.

The central subscriptions, and the local supplements, do not prejudice one another; they are found to react favourably upon each other, and mutually to increase. It is also found that the aid-receiving congregations are diminishing in number, and the self-sustaining and aid-giving are on the increase.

The average stipend of the ministers is even at present over £200, and will speedily be increased.

In addition, there are the missions, home and foreign, and innumerable funds,—as, for the Ante-Disruption ministers, for aged ministers, for their widows and orphans, etc.,—all most liberally supported.

The total amount raised for colleges has been £194,620; for schools, £347,701; for the ministry, £4,899,155;—in all, about 5½ millions.

The whole known and recorded contributions during these twenty-five years—apart from large private benefactions and donations which can never be ascertained—amount to eight million and sixty-six thousand pounds.

Instead of drying up, or there being any difficulty of collection, we have the testimony of Dr. Robert Buchanan, the able historian of *The Ten Years' Conflict*, who has always been at the centre of the movement, and who has long been the administrator of the finance: 'I doubt if there is any other revenue in the kingdom, civil or ecclesiastical, that comes in with such reliable regularity as our Free Church Sustentation Fund.'

I do not say that the present tremor which runs through all Church Establishments—the sort of shudder that is felt just before the vessel goes down—is wholly attributable to the disruption of the Scottish Church in 1843. Many other dissolvents have been at work during the past quarter of a century. The Establishments have long given offence by many abuses, many glaring inconsistencies with the idea and primitive type of the Christian Church, by in-

ternal dissensions, and by a political spirit generally in opposition to the opinions and movements of the great body of the people. Dissent, if not gaining much ground in point of numbers, has been growing in wealth, in importance, in the intelligence and status of its members, in political weight, and altogether in heaviness of counterpoise to its favoured rivals. The 'masses,' as they are called, have very much fallen off from connection with any of the denominations; but if they have not gone to strengthen the Dissenters, their withdrawment has shaken the foundations—the *raison d'être*—of the Establishments, and taken away from them the support which is derived from the mere presence of a great mass, however inert it may be, and however destitute of any active principle. Our thinking, unprejudiced men, on the other hand, are becoming more and more averse to the State or Government, which is the universal trustee of the nation, identifying itself with any one particular sect, and helping and distinguishing it above all the rest; and they believe, especially, that religious teaching will be all the purer when it is let alone by Govern-

ment, and that independent zeal will be more effectual than clerical officialism, hanging on the nod of prime ministers and chancellors and worldly superiors. But if these and many other weakening causes have been at work against Establishments, I think it is now felt by all thoughtful observers, that the Scottish Disruption, followed by the successful operations of the Free Church, has had by far the most undermining effects. It was the first breaking-up of the concrete of Establishments; it broke up the most popular and least burdensome of them all, and drove out the ablest advocates of the principle; and then the experience of the Free Church has substantiated that the religious teaching of the people, instead of suffering from disestablishment, may, by a skilful but easy and simple organization, be rooted deeper, and made more vital and effective, than when nursed by endowments, and rendered sickly by the hothouse applications of the State. This experience has made a deep and visible impression upon public opinion. There is little of the old superstition about the sacredness of Establishments; little of the old horror about

leaving religion, without human props, to the omnipotence of its Author, and the faith and love of His followers. Statesmen, tired of the interminable Church debates, are now convinced that the whole useful and blessed influences of religion upon society may be secured by the free organization of the various Christian communities.

The true working clergymen in all the Establishments are now satisfied, that even in a temporal point of view—as a business question of *living*, which every man, clerical as well as lay, must consider — they are as safe, if not safer, with the voluntary liberalities of the Christian people, managed by superior organization, than with the endowments of the State, so unjustly divided, and so capriciously bestowed. The working clergymen have no fears, whatever may be the trepidation of dignitaries, pluralists, and sinecurists. The laity in the episcopally governed churches are beginning to see that it is only by taking down the hostile buttresses of Establishment, and throwing open the doors and passages to wholesome ventilation—only in this way that they are to regain

their legitimate privileges, that they can lift up a potential voice in the councils of their Church, and apply some check to sacerdotal mummeries and pretensions. High Church is fretting under the Privy Council; Low Church is groaning under Ritualism, which no Court of Arches can stop; Broad Church, free by the letter of the law, is recovering some scruples of honour, feeling that even the loose Thirty-nine Articles may be too far strained, and is beginning to resign its fellowships and livings. The old peers and squires, who used to swear by the Church, get little help from the clergy at the elections, and see a good chance of pre-emptions and redemptions in the scramble of Church lands; and they talk over their wine, it is said, 'What is the good of these parsons? the Methodist fellows carry most votes.' So the best motives and the basest motives of human nature are all pushing in the way to disestablishment.

It must always be remembered, however,—what we have formerly had occasion to remark,—that, notwithstanding his success, the Disruption was to Chalmers a sad and dire necessity. He never altered his opinions as

to the economic and religious expediency of a Church Establishment. He never trusted Voluntaryism, except as a useful auxiliary; so little did he trust its gushes, that it will have been seen, from the previous explanations, that the very essence of his financial plans was to collect and guide and store its streams of supply into a central reservoir for fixed distribution, — in other words, to assimilate Voluntaryism, as near as he could, to the independence, permanency, and regularity of a *State endowment.* We have already shown, by quotations of the time, how his mind was harrowed by the Disruption. It dispelled all his dearly-cherished visions of a full territorial extension of churches and schools, the reclamation of the large towns, the amelioration of the poorer classes, the raising of the standard of religion and virtue amongst the whole people.

Another heavy blow fell upon him about the same time, and added to his burden of disappointment. That was, the excited cry from 1841 to 1845 for a change in the Poor-Laws (as we have previously related),—a cry for compulsory assessment, liberal legal relief, and for dis-

carding all dependence upon that spontaneous charity which he had always inculcated. This cry was raised by a good man, Dr. Alison of Edinburgh,—within his own sphere of medical science a very able man,—known, respected, and beloved through the whole community; whose own goodness and charity was an ever-flowing fountain; whose hours were worth guineas for the richest patients, but who consecrated his whole leisure to the poorest and most wretched, to the wrecks of disease in forgotten cellars and garrets. In the mornings, the street where he lived was inundated with half-lazars and half-beggars, till the joke, and probably the fact, was, that he had brought down the rents of the neighbourhood. In the afternoons, when finished with his class, he might be seen—a large, heavy, rather unwieldy man as he was, and advanced in years—posting down to the Cowgate of Edinburgh, fast as if he had been called by a duchess—to the lowest dens of want, disease, infamy, and misery. A favourite medical student, wishing to consult him about something, caught him one day as he was leaving the class-room. 'Come away,' said

Alison, putting his arm in the young man's; 'I am in a hurry. I have about two hours to visit my patients; you can tell me your story on the way.' In a few minutes the student discovered that his *patients* resided, not in the mansions of Moray Place, but in the fever-beds of the Cowgate. I have many a time watched him the mile and a half between the College and his house in Heriot Row—the tall, bulky form, the lurching walk, the inevitable umbrella, the long, massive, ruddy countenance, the bright brown compassion-speaking eyes, the saluting citizens,—and as he drew himself along, the whole beggars and diseased creatures and impostors of Edinburgh seemed to follow his track; they stalked him from street to street like a deer, then pounced upon him at some corner where he could not make his escape; and after a menace from the big umbrella, and an angry shake of the head, some words of misery reached his ear (ah, well they knew that quickly melting heart!), and he was sure to drop some small coin into their hands. Who could withstand such an angel of mercy when pleading for the poor? And it may be remem-

bered that 1840–41 were seasons of stagnation and poignant distress in most of our manufacturing and commercial towns. Alison—all softness of nature, and daily amid these scenes of want and woe—was driven nearly distracted, and was inflamed to as high a pitch of enthusiasm for instant and copious relief, as Chalmers cherished for prudent assistance, and that only from the stores of spontaneous charity. The Scotch—so tender-hearted when you get through the weather-beaten skin—were dissolved in tears at his appeals of pity; and almost at his bidding they passed their Poor-Law of 1845, which, as we have proved by numerous evidences, they now bitterly regret. Even Chalmers had no chance for the moment against such a man. It was a question, not of sense, but of sensibility. Chalmers, in feeling, was as benevolent as Alison. Without drawing any invidious comparison between two such excellent men, Chalmers had done at least as much actual and corporeal good in his own sphere to the poor, as Alison. But Chalmers was an inductionist, and could look at the facts on all sides; Alison looked only at the disease

and misery. Chalmers was an adept in Carlyle's *dismal science*, and could repress mere emotion, in the belief that there was a better, surer, though perhaps slower way of relieving poverty. Alison could not bear, even for an hour, the pain, the suffering, the groans of his fellow-creatures: 'Give instant relief, listen to your heart, not to political economy.' Chalmers for once was fairly beat; his facts were pronounced moonshine, his eloquence treated as rant, his philanthropy at best a good-natured delusion. The country said proudly, 'Yes, we will compulsorily assess ourselves for the full relief of all our poor.' The old man was discomfited, was sometimes nettled, at the defiance of the lessons which he had been teaching and proving for so many years. Much as he esteemed the general virtues of Alison, he intensely believed him, in this matter, to be acting on dangerous impulses, to be short-sighted and mischievous. 'Dr. Alison, sir,' he exclaimed one day when his name happened to be introduced, 'Dr. Alison is a mere *lump* of benevolence!'

But, with his habitual self-denial, humility,

and patient waiting, he confessed that in both instances—territorial extension, and the extinction of pauperism—his deep fundamental convictions had been blasted; and he must leave any germs which might be sound and sterling in them, to be realized by other hands in God's own time. He bids adieu to his past; his ploughshare is broken, and he must turn to other fields. How touching is the old man's surrender of the darling projects of a lifetime, and his prayer, not so much that his own conceptions should ever be passed, as that the welfare of mankind might hereafter be promoted, in comfort, in instruction, in religion, by such means, whatsoever they might be, as Providence, in the end, might determine to be the best! Thus he speaks in the *Horæ Sabbaticæ*, in his meditations upon the tower of Babel, and its failure, and the scattering of the builders:—

'I have been set on the erection of my Babels—on the establishment of at least two great objects, which, however right in themselves, became the mere idols of a fond and proud imagination, in as far as they are not prosecuted

with a feeling of dependence upon God, and a supreme desire after His glory. These two objects are—the deliverance of our empire from pauperism, and the establishment of an adequate machinery for the Christian and general instruction of our whole population. I am sure that, in the advancement of these, I have not taken God enough with me, and trusted more to my own arguments and combinations among my fellows than to prayers. There has been no confounding of tongues to prevent a common understanding, so indispensable to that co-operation without which there can be no success; but without this miracle my views have been marvellously impeded by a diversity of opinions as great as if it had been brought on by a diversity of language. The barrier in the way of access to other men's minds has been as obstinate and unyielding as if I had spoken to them in foreign speech; and though I cannot resign my convictions, I must now—and surely it is good to be so taught—I must now, under the experimental sense of my own helplessness, acknowledge with all humility, yet with hope in the efficacy of a blessing from on high still

in reserve for the day of God's own appointed time, that except the Lord build the house, the builders build in vain. In Thine own good time, Almighty Father! regenerate this earth, and gather its people into one happy and harmonious and righteous family.'

XXII.

SEASONS OF RECREATION.

FOR these sixteen or seventeen years past we have been studying Chalmers only in his most severe and strenuous labours,—first, for the defence and extension of the Established Church; and then, the Establishment having failed him, for the organization of a new Church throughout the land, free in its discipline and action, and with a full equipment of schools and other civilising agencies. We have been missing all this while the blinks of relief we used to enjoy, either in glimpses into the domestic interior, or by following him in his journeys to London and other great cities, or in his wanderings to and fro through the country. After the strain we have been enduring, we feel the want of relaxation. Let us see

what he has been doing all this time. Has he been always on the stretch? has the bow been always bent? No indeed! he has contrived from time to time to have his pastimes and recreations. He has had more variety, more running about, more merriment, than any of those who have nothing else to do than pleasure-hunting, which generally means disappointment-catching. For pleasure, like the good milch-cow, yields most to those who come to her at due intervals; she runs dry to those who are always pulling and draining at her.

In the course of 1830, to go back to the time when he was first settled in Edinburgh, he was twice in the great Metropolis. The first time was to give evidence before a Parliamentary committee on Irish pauperism, when we find him greatly taken out, as usual, amongst the higher nobility, and politicians, and the dignitaries of the Church of England. He was nominated one of His Majesty's chaplains for Scotland; and the honour was enhanced by a letter from Sir Robert Peel, announcing that the appointment was conferred 'exclusively in consideration of his high character and eminent

acquirements and services.' When in London at this time he was much with the philanthropists —with Wilberforce, Mrs. Fry, the Buxtons, and the Gurneys. One of the young Gurneys, who was with him for several days at Wilberforce's, draws a Plutarch-like comparison between the two men, of which we extract the closing sentences. 'I often think that particular men bear about with them an analogy to particular animals. Chalmers is like a good-tempered lion; Wilberforce is like a bee. Chalmers can say a pleasant thing now and then, and laugh when he has said it, and he has a strong touch of humour in his countenance; but in general he is *grave*, his thoughts grow to a great size before they are uttered. Wilberforce sparkles with life and wit, and the characteristic of his mind is rapid productiveness. A man might be in Chalmers's company for an hour, especially in a party, without knowing who or what he was, though in the end he would be sure to be detected by some display of powerful originality. Wilberforce, except when fairly asleep, is never latent. Chalmers knows how to veil himself in a decent cloud; Wilberforce is always in sunshine. . . .

Yet these persons, distinguished as they are from the world at large, and from each other, present some admirable points of resemblance. Both of them are broad thinkers, and liberal feelers; both of them are arrayed in humility, meekness, and charity; both appear to hold self in little reputation; above all, both love the Lord Jesus Christ, and reverently acknowledge Him to be their only Saviour.'

The next visit to London was in the end of the same year, when he attended as one of the deputation from the General Assembly to present a congratulatory address to the new monarch, William IV. On his way he paid a visit, which he never failed to do when in his power, to his sister Jane in Gloucestershire; also to Oxford, where the college magnates shower attentions upon him—Whately, Burton, Shuttleworth, Whewell. As he was much inclined to silence in miscellaneous company, he felt greatly relieved at Oxford. 'The people here all love better to speak than to hear; so that I, who give way on these occasions, had less to do in that way.' His descriptions of the Court ceremonies, and of his own preparations

and feelings, are naive in the extreme—a mixture of genuine Conservative loyalty, with irrepressible laughter at the staginess of the whole affair. The deputation were up at seven, and were in a flutter all the morning with 'dressing, and anxiety on all hands to be as snod (neat) as possible.' But they were not agreed how and when to make their bows to royalty. 'I fear we shall misbehave.' Assembled in their hotel at one, but in frightful consternation as their cocked hats had not come. Having ultimately procured their fitting head-gear, they drove in four coaches; were ushered into the palace, amid a dazzling throng of generals and admirals, and chancellors, and primates, and flunkeys, who were the most imposingly dressed of all. In all this blaze of grandeur the Presbyterian deputation were by no means eclipsed. 'Our deputation made a most respectable appearance among them, with our cocked three-cornered hats under our arms, our bands upon our breasts, and our gowns of Geneva upon our backs. 'Mine,' he continues—for misfits will happen where there is hasty tailoring—'mine did not lap so

close as I would have liked, so that I was twice as thick as I should be'—which must have been an aldermanic girth; but then he had this consolation, 'it must have been palpable to every eye, at the first glance, that I was the *greatest* man there.' They made their bows when they reached the throne, without misbehaving themselves; read their little address, received the little answer in return, then knelt and kissed the king's hand. 'I went through my kneel and my kiss very comfortably.' The king exercised his royal genius by holding a conversation with each of them. As we poor plebeians have a strange cacoethes to know what kings and queens say, we shall transcribe entire the conversation with Chalmers, for the satisfaction of anxious minds. 'His first question to me was, "Do you reside constantly in Edinburgh?" I said, "Yes, an't please your majesty;" and his next question was, "How long do you remain in town?" I said, "Till Monday, an't please your majesty."' What a model of simplicity in questions and answers! O if the Civil Service examinations were only such, what a relief would it be to many an

over-crammed youth! We humblest plebeians need no longer be afraid of appearing at Court, so far as regards any strain upon the intellect. Afterwards they kissed Queen Adelaide's hand, 'and then retired with three bows, which the queen returned most gracefully, but with all the simplicity, I had almost said bashfulness, of a timid country girl.' A queen *bashful!* that at least is a royal fashion which we recommend to the imitation of all girls of the period.

At the levee, by-the-bye, he saw Talleyrand; and the image of him is striking, has almost historic value. 'Far the most interesting object there was Talleyrand — whom I could get nobody to introduce me to—splendidly attired as the French ambassador, attended by some French military officers. *I gazed with interest on the old shrivelled face of him*, and thought I could see there the lines of deep reflection and lofty talent. His moral physiognomy, however, is a downright blank. He was by far the most important continental personage in the room, and drew all eyes.' The bold, frank, gladsome eye of Chalmers, gazing with interest 'on the old shrivelled face' of Talleyrand—is it not a

subject for a picture?—wisdom, in all its simplicity, contrasted with artifice, in all its subtle machinations; like the moon in cloudless serenity looking down upon the abyss of the Dead Sea, beneath whose scum-covered waters lie the wrecks of so many guilty things of the past!

For three years from this date (1830), he has been kept very close at work on revisions of his Lectures, on Bridgewater Treatises, and his cherished book on Political Economy, which was published in 1832. Rocks are now also ahead, in navigating the vessel of the Church. She is grinding along the Scylla of the Voluntary controversy on the one side; on the other, frowns the Charybdis of Non-intrusion, on which she is ultimately fated to break. But he escapes, in the summer of 1833, from his toils and cares and logomachies. What is he to do this time?—'to gratify an ambition he long had cherished, and lived to realize, of having seen and ascended to the summit of all the *cathedrals of England*.' Two inducing causes were probably urging him on: a growing attraction to what he styled, in his alliterative manner,

'the might and the mastery' of the venerable Establishment of England—an attraction still more stimulated by his antagonism with the Voluntary Dissenters; and over and above, his innate passion for the constructive arts, especially the higher productions of architecture and statuary, in preference to the other fine arts, as, for example, painting and music. Next to his pure, almost commingling love of nature, which lay deep in the inmost chords of his being, and seldom sought expression in the mere rhapsodies of outer description, was his love for the architectural masterpieces,—fine palaces, great castles, huge-spanning bridges, and cathedrals with their 'long-drawn aisles and fretted vaults.' He seldom takes notice of paintings; and in all his visits to London, and even amongst the cathedrals with their solemn services, he scarcely once gives utterance to any musical emotion.

It has been questioned whether, like so many men of genius, who have been masters of the most delicious harmony in their writings, such as Burns, Scott, Coleridge, Goethe, he was really destitute of what is usually termed

an *ear* for music. From all that I can learn, he had only an ear for good marked *tunes* (as was the case with Burns and Scott); but all the higher concerted pieces were to him a mere confusion, without object or meaning. He was present at an evening party, where a very accomplished lady was discoursing most eloquent music from the fashionable opera of the day. When she was at the overture and the recitatives he looked perplexed, as if listening to a medley of madness; but when she struck upon some lively and expressive airs, he turned round with a look of great relief to the gentleman who was next to him, 'Do you know, sir, *I love these lucid intervals!*'

His journey this time was down the Backbone of England, from Carlisle and Kendal, through the moorlands of the West Riding to the Peaks of Derbyshire, thence by Oxford to London, and thence again by Cambridge, through the eastern and north-eastern counties, studded with cathedrals, home into Scotland by the Borders.

His love of nature comes out strongly amidst the fantastic limestone summits, and the fearful subterranean caverns, and the quiet pastoral

valleys of the West Riding and of Derbyshire. Some of his descriptions are inimitable of their kind; so exact, so minute, so crisply and picturesquely expressed, so concise yet so complete and vivid, lit up with fancy and feeling. They evince that, if his studies and the objects of his life had led that way, he would have excelled in many departments of literature, which he had little opportunity to cultivate, and for which it was commonly supposed he had not the faculty. His Journals all through this excursion are as full of incident as a novel, often as charming as a poem, and always as scrupulously correct and graphic as if he had been writing for a scientific magazine. They would have delighted old Humboldt; and many of the passages would have deserved a place in his *Cosmos*, amongst his quotations from the perfect descriptions of natural scenery.

We cannot, however, linger over those rich and attractive landscapes; yet one cannot help at least dwelling a moment on his simple, broad, and all-embracing humanity. He took a gig and driver with him from Huddersfield all through the Derbyshire country. He reads

his book in the gig, then diversifies by a chat with the driver, and finally conceives quite an attachment for him. 'Though it is a little more expensive, I always take him to the sights along with me. First, because I found a great ignorance of Derbyshire curiosities in Huddersfield, and I want to make him more enlightened and enlarged than his fellow-citizens. Second, because I always feel a strong reflex or secondary enjoyment in the gratifications of other people, so that the sympathy of his enjoyment greatly enhances my own. And thirdly, because I get amusement from the remarks of his simple wonderment, and not very sagacious observation; and it has now passed into a standing joke with me, when leaving any of our exhibitions, that "there is no such fine sight to be seen at Huddersfield."' After several days of this homely and pleasing companionship, wondering and bantering together, the roads in life of the professor and of the postboy divided at Matlock. Such a love was there in Chalmers, both human and heavenly, that a pathetic sweetness hangs over their parting. 'Here I parted with my honest and simple-hearted driver, having

previously, and just before, ascertained from him his name. It is John Dean. He can scarcely read, he tells me; and on this subject I gave him my solemn advice, telling him . . . that many perish for lack of knowledge, and that he must prepare himself for an acquaintance with that precious Bible which is able to make him wise unto salvation, through the faith that is in Jesus Christ. A person who has given you three days' service, and from whom you have extracted three days' amusement, has earned no slight claim to your permanent regard; and I desire to treasure up and cherish, as one of the interesting reminiscences of my life, the idea of *John Dean of Huddersfield*.'

From Derbyshire, by Cambridge, to London, where he preaches on Sunday: the concourse quite unabated. Amongst the hearers, the Duke of Sussex, the Duke of Richmond, Lord John Russell, Sir Robert Peel. On Monday, to the House of Commons. Amongst others who came to him, Mr. Daniel O'Connell, 'who shook me most cordially by the hands, complimenting me on my evidence about the Irish poor-laws, saying that he was a disciple of mine upon that

subject, and not of his own priest, Dr. Doyle. . . . It would have done your heart much good to have seen how closely and cordially Mr. Daniel O'Connell and your papa hugged and greeted each other in the Lower House of Parliament.' After some weeks in London, where he was more courted and admired than ever, he started, about the end of July, on his more special examination of the *cathedrals*, all through the eastern and north-eastern counties, and came out again upon his native heath somewhere in Liddesdale. His curiosity, and humanity, and intimacy with all ranks and classes, continue to afford the richest entertainment; but *space* compels us to abstain from the tempting repast. Everything confirms the remark of Gurney at Norwich: 'I never saw a man who appeared to be more destitute of vanity, or less alive to any wish to be brilliant.'

The years 1834 and 1835 rained thick with honours. He was elected a fellow, then one of the vice-presidents, of the Royal Society of Edinburgh; a corresponding member of the Institute of France; and at the annual commemoration at Oxford, in 1835, he was invested

with the degree of Doctor of Laws. The two last honours had never previously been conferred upon any Scottish clergyman.

Some years previously he had published his treatise in defence of *Literary and Ecclesiastical Endowments.* Amongst many other eulogiums on the English Universities, he declared, 'that there are no seminaries in Europe on which there sits a greater weight of accumulated glory than that which has been reflected, both on Oxford and Cambridge, by that long and bright train of descendants who have sprung from them. It is impossible to make even the bare perusal of their names, without the feeling that there has been summoned before the eye of the mind the panorama of all that has upheld the lustre, whether of England's philosophy or of England's patriotism, for centuries together.' The scholars of England had already, in the pages of the *Quarterly Review,* expressed their admiration of his Defence, and pronounced it 'a treatise which would alone have been sufficient to immortalize its author;' and now Oxford, by one of the proudest honours in her gift, and the welcome accorded to him by her sons, conveyed the tes-

timony of her appreciation and gratitude. The late Lord Elgin, then a student at Oxford, and of a family always most intimate with Chalmers, has left some reminiscences of the scene. 'Rarely have I witnessed as much enthusiasm in the Oxford theatre as was manifested when he presented himself to go through the ceremony of admission. . . . Dr. Chalmers was himself deeply affected by the warmth with which he was greeted; and I think I might almost venture to say, that he looked upon this visit to Oxford as one of the most pleasing incidents in his career.' Lord Elgin mentions many little traits of his character, full of that boyish delight which he always exhibited on such occasions. 'I well remember his coming to my apartment at Merton, before eight o'clock one morning, and telling me of a sequestered court which he had found in a college into which he had strayed on his way from Christ Church, and the earnestness with which he claimed credit for having thus discovered for himself a spot of surpassing beauty, which could, he assured me, be known to few.'

In commenting upon the marvellous effects which he produced as an orator, we have already

sufficiently told the story of his appearance in London in the spring of 1838, when he delivered his lectures in defence of Established Churches, amid the uncontrollable ecstasies of the grandees of England, lay and spiritual, who for once forgot their frigidities, and shouted and clapped, started to their feet and hurrahed, quite as wildly as if they had belonged to the 'great unwashed.'

We have also, under the same head, related at some length his visit to Paris, in the summer following, to be formally admitted as a member of the Institute. Notwithstanding difficulties of conversation, he was cordially received and highly honoured by the leading men of France, such as Guizot, Mignet, and, above all, the Duke de Broglie, Grand Seigneur of Normandy, of the purest French type of noble and of man.

The Duke has died, eighty-five years of age, just as I am writing these pages (in the end of January 1870). Since the crime of the 2d December 1851, hopeless of true liberty in his time, he has wrapt himself up in retirement, in study, thought, and benevolence; and the chroniclers of the passing moment have dropped him out

of their calendar, until now, to announce his death. I have a love for setting suns; I bow, in preference, to those whose course is run. I am tempted, therefore, to turn aside for a moment, and gaze in respect at the long line of continuous light which marks the setting of the Duke de Broglie.

These Broglies were an old hardy Piedmontese stock, who came into France in the beginning of the seventeenth century, and before the end of it had produced three marshals, which in those feudal and military times was esteemed the highest dignity in France. The father of the Duke, about the end of the eighteenth century, entered upon the inheritance of all their extensive domains. He was amongst the nobles who threw up the feudal privileges of their caste in the earlier stages of the Revolution; but he was also amongst those who perished under the guillotine in its later excesses. His son Victor, born in 1785, had protectors amongst the chiefs of the Revolution, and was enabled to retain the family estates. Having no taste for the military life, which had been the characteristic of his house, he applied himself to the study of

philosophy and literature, law and politics. He became, even when young, an accomplished scholar, *savant*, jurist, and adept both in the theory and practice of government. Napoleon, who desired to surround his throne with the families of the ancient noblesse, showed him particular favour, made him auditor of the Council of State, and sent him on several important embassies; but he served the despot reluctantly, and had an innate repugnance to all arbitrary government. On the restoration of the Bourbons in 1815, he was named a peer of France; but he was no more favourable to reaction than to despotism; and with Royer-Collard, Guizot, and other friends of moderate constitutional government, he founded the celebrated party of the *Doctrinaires*—the French Whigs—who were, in fact, the opposition under the reigns of Louis XVIII. and Charles X. In 1816 he married Albertine, daughter of Madame de Staël, who inherited much of the talent of her mother, and possessed in addition that gift of beauty which her mother wanted, and which she valued so highly, that she said 'she would willingly part with all her

other gifts to obtain it.' Albertine was a fervent Protestant, the Duke a fervent Roman Catholic; but that difference of creed never disturbed a union the most affectionate and happy. The Duchess—young, beautiful, as we have said, and exquisitely charming, truly pious, yet fully alive to all the joys of life and all the advantages of her high position—loved the world as her mother had done, and, like her, was the ornament of society. Her reunions were for twenty years the delight of Paris, and called to mind the grand assemblies of former generations. The Duke had seen enough of revolution to shrink from all sudden and violent changes in the form of government; yet his judgment told him that the elder Bourbons were incorrigible. He concurred in throwing off their yoke; and, on the Revolution of July 1830, he at once declared himself in favour of Louis Philippe, and was nominated minister of public instruction. His political character and objects have been delineated by Guizot in his *Memoirs*. 'The Duke was more of a liberal than a democrat, and of a nature as refined as elevated. All disorderly revolutionary policy was as displeas-

ing to him as to me. Although differing in origin, situation, and also in character, we were united, not only by a friendship already of long continuance, but by an intimate community of general principles and sentiments, the most powerful of ties when it exists truly, which is rare.'

In 1832 he was minister of foreign affairs, and asserted the rights of his office against the interferences of Louis Philippe, whose error and ruin as a sovereign was, that, not contented simply to reign, he must also govern. 'Louis Philippe,' says Guizot, 'had for the Duke de Broglie more of esteem and confidence than of liking.' But the Duke, proof alike against blandishments and obstructions, calmly pursued his way, and developed his own ideas of foreign policy. He cemented the alliance with England, and joined in further measures for the suppression of the slave trade; he held his head high against the disdain and secret hostility of the northern courts; curbed the haughty Czar, and compelled him to pay at least outward courtesy to the government of the citizen-king; actively assisted in effecting the independence

of Belgium and of Greece; favoured the establishment of constitutionalism in Spain; gave the last blow to the detestable Holy Alliance; and smoothed down certain dangerous asperities between France and the United States. But he was becoming daily more disgusted with the embroilment of public affairs. Louis Philippe sought for tools, not independent ministers; scrupled at no corruption, and would readily violate any constitutional duty to accomplish his personal desires. The revolutionary factions, tired out for a while, but not appeased, were again raising their crested heads, and found only too much matter to inflame the passions of the populace in the petty tyrannies and dishonesties of the old royal intriguer. The just, stern, and spotless soul of De Broglie was equally sick of the corruption and the faction; and nothing but a sense of duty to his country retained him in the bondage of public life: an accident, if it appeared to him sufficient, might any day cut the tie. A strong stern word spoken by him one day in the Chamber, gave him the deliverance for which he had long sighed. A member had brought forward a proposition on some

very incidental matter. De Broglie, as president of the Council, was stating the objections of the Government, when some of the members, long impatient of his unbending manner, interrupted him with cries that his statement was not clear. He paused a moment, then resumed, and repeated his statements, and turning round upon his interrupters, demanded, in a self-possessed but severe tone, 'Is *that* clear?' The clamours were only aggravated; the members affected to feel themselves insulted; many votes were lost to the Government; and the issue was, that De Broglie gladly tendered a resignation which Louis Philippe as gladly accepted. This was in 1835. He retired from what to him were only the cares and burdens of office, never to return. But he statedly attended his place as a peer of France, and did everything to confirm the authority of Louis Philippe, and lent his general support and influence to the policy of his friend Guizot. He was the high patrician head of the French Liberals—what our own Earl Grey and Marquis of Lansdowne used to be to the Whigs. The Duchess, whilst sustaining the

honour, hospitality, and splendour of the house, was evincing a more marked and earnest attention to religion. Her reunions were as brilliant, her manners as fascinating, her character held in as high estimation as ever; but society whispered that she was a *Methodist.* She kept up religious worship, and a quiet, unpretending religious aspect in her family; she wrote and published many simple, excellent, elegantly composed little essays on morals and religion, and translated several religious works from the English and other languages. One of her friends had translated Chalmers's sermons at St. John's; so that, long before he was known to them in the flesh, he was known to them in the spirit of Christian fellowship. It was at this time (1838), when the Duke was at full leisure, that Chalmers was their guest. Alas! within a few months of his visit, the Duchess fell a prey to some sudden malady—a loss to her husband and family irreparable, and casting the shade of a wide sorrow amongst the thousands who had known and admired and loved her. In 1848 he saw the so-called constitutional monarchy overthrown. He was grieved for his country, be-

cause he always distrusted revolutions, but he felt that Louis Philippe had brought his fate upon himself; and he shortly afterwards offered his services to compose the people, who were in the throes of a new and tumultuous agitation, and to secure some rational and settled form of government. When Louis Napoleon was raised to be President of the Republic, he foresaw that both republican and all constitutional government was doomed. He joined the small but heroic band of Liberals, who mustered in active resistance to the *coup d'état* of 1851. They were put under arrest by armed force, and might well look forward to the worst fate; but as violence, bloodshed, and terror had already imposed that silence which tyrants call peace, it was not deemed necessary to kill any more, and the illustrious prisoners were released. The Duke, foreseeing that such a rule could only be continued by force, that thought and discussion must in the meantime be blotted out, and having no faith in that generation of his countrymen, retired into the absolute seclusion in which he has ever since remained. Let us read the inscription which an eloquent com-

patriot (Léonce de Lavergne) has written over his peaceful hermitage:—

'Modest and proud, he has never sought honours, he has never disdained them, he has never thought about them at all; and what is rarer still, he has no more courted popularity and renown than power. In the grand epoch of the republic of Holland, he would have been a De Witt or a Barneveldt; in England he would have been the venerated head of the great Whig party. . . . More still than his acts, there will remain of him, that which remains of the Russells and the Hampdens whose memory he so often invoked—the remembrance and example of a great citizen!'

Such, then, was the family that paid the highest attention to Chalmers when he was on his visit to France. It is gratifying indeed to his admirers to find that French society offered him its homage through its most august representative of nobility, intellect, virtue, and piety. The Duke was amongst the first who waited upon Chalmers after his arrival at Paris —'kind, but retired,' remarks Chalmers; but the retirement, natural to the Duke, wore off on

further intercourse, and they had the most cordial and interesting converse. The Duchess and family were down on the estate in Normandy, and there Chalmers was invited.

His abode at the chateau of Broglie reads like a chapter in some domestic idyll. The Duchess was most affable and attentive to him; so also her sister-in-law, Madame de Staël. 'Drew much to Madame de Staël,' he mentions in his Journal; 'delicate, pensive, highly interesting.' When his visit came to an end, 'They took leave of me,' he records, 'with much kindness, and, I have even the fondness to think, with some feeling. I myself felt much; and I pray for God's best blessing on the heads of all whom I met in that abode of elegant and lettered hospitality.' The Duchess, as we have already noted, died a few months afterwards; and in a letter of condolence to her husband, Chalmers writes:—

'Her kindness during the few days I lived under your hospitable roof will never, never be effaced from my grateful recollection. Her conversation, and, above all, her prayers poured forth in the domestic circle, and which, at the time of their utterance, fell upon my ears like

the music of paradise, have left a fragrance behind them, and the memory of them is sweet.'

From the chateau of Broglie to the Bullers of Buchan is a rough leap; but it can be taken—*on paper*. In the autumn, then, of 1839 he is in the far north of Scotland, collecting money for his territorial extension, and always, at the same time, visiting all the principal families, and surveying all the notable places. Somewhere near Cromarty he is disgusted with the silly, insipid religious talk of the party, and marks his disgust very unceremoniously. 'A rather large and fatiguing party; and some of them had the tone and manner of commonplace religious society. One lady asked me "if I was proud, or if I was humble"—in the idea, I have no doubt, that the admiration of her, and such as she, must prove a sore trial to my vanity. My reply was, *that I was somewhat short in the temper*, under the fatigues and annoyances to which I was occasionally exposed in my public labours.' Poor, commonplace pious lady! how she must have been shocked to find she had caught a bear like Dr. Johnson, in one with whom she expected to have such sweet converse

for the evening. After much adventurousness, we come to the dreadful sea-caldron of the said Bullers of Buchan—fierce sea-monster, that can seldom be approached, but ofttimes sucks into her bosom the passing skiff or schooner, and instantly dashes it to pieces. 'Fell in with fishermen,' he records, 'who said that it was quite a day for the boat. *My heart leaped for joy at the achievement of getting inside of the Buller*, —so rare, that even Mr. Philip, the parish minister, had never been there, and Mr. Robertson, of the neighbouring parish, only once. So we scudded down the brae, launched the boat, manned it with four hands, and committed ourselves to the waves, which were moderate enough to admit of the enterprise, for it is only safe in calm weather. . . . Turned south to the Buller, where we were presented with a lofty arch, having a fine massive bending alcove, and leading to a hollow cylinder, with the sky overhead, and a lofty wall of precipice all round. The waves rose higher in the archway, which is narrow, insomuch that our gallant crew had to ply their boat-hooks on both sides to keep us off the rocks; but got at length into the

bottom of the churn, which churns nobly in a storm, and causes a manufacture of yeast, that flies in light frothy balls up to the top of the caldron, and is carried off through the country. It was calm enough, however, now to admit of our leisurely contemplation of the magnificent alcove into which we had gotten; and after glorying in our exploit for some minutes, we rowed and boat-hooked our way back again. . . . On ascending the brae, went to the top of the Buller, and looked down to the place' (200 feet below, say the guide-books) 'where we had been rolling half an hour before. With the exception of its land side, there is a narrow rim all round it, broadest at the place which surmounts the archway, but contracting into three or four feet at other places, and wearing away at one part into the most ticklish step of all. This rim is perpendicular on both sides, yet so often circumambulated, even by ladies, as to be trodden into a foot-path. I had the greatest desire to finish my conquest of the Buller by following in the footsteps of these heroines, but thought of prosaic mamma, and made a virtue of moderation. Mr. Robertson

says that if I had offered to do it, he would have laid violent hands upon me. It is, in truth, very seldom done; though the last Duke of Gordon but one, after having dined at Slaines Castle, is said to have rode round it on horseback—a truly after-dinner achievement!'

Who can doubt, but for thinking of 'prosaic mamma,' and the urgent dissuasions of his companions, that Thomas Chalmers, aged sixty, would have walked round that dangerous ledge, 200 feet above those roaring Bullers, with all the daring of his Anster boyhood? His very first expression, '*My heart leaped for joy* at the achievement of getting inside of the Buller,' reads like the beginning of a Norse ballad. On the other hand, it reminds us also of the mood of feeling so tenderly expressed by Wordsworth, but under a softer association than that of the Bullers of Buchan—even on the sudden apparition of a rainbow:—

'*My heart leaps up* when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die!

The child is father of the man ;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.'

Truly with Chalmers also, the child was father of the man. There was difference of shading, but no break in the continuity of the line; and his days were bound each to each by the golden ties of truth, simplicity, and loving-kindness, crowned at last with a full realizing faith and an ever-progressive spirituality.

For five or six years, the most tempestuous, perhaps the only tempestuous years of his life, when his once beloved Church was broken in twain, and, with grieved yet undaunted heart, he had to organize a new one, amid obloquy and desertion,—for these five or six years he seldom left the scene of action, but toiled away with more than the unflagging energy of manhood. He was always in action, always buoyant, and always, like the knights of old, loved to work alongside a true man. 'I have no feeling of age,' said he one day to a valued and most gifted fellow-worker, who had been assisting him in a long day's spell at arithmetical calculations,—'I have no feeling of age ; my mind is

as firm, my memory as perfect as ever. There's only one sign of age,' he added with a laugh; 'I canna bear to be contradicted.' Then, surveying with triumph the long bristling array of figures which they had calculated and checked together, 'O man,' he exclaimed eagerly, 'what a quantity of work I could have gone through if I had always had you at my side! Sir, I have been *taigled* (entangled) with a set of speaking machines all my life.'

Anon, however, having pioneered the way through all the early difficulties, he shook himself free about the end of 1844, when he was sixty-four years of age, from these exhausting complications; and again he used his new-recovered liberty in boyish rambles to many of his old remembered scenes.

XXIII.

THE CHILD IS FATHER OF THE MAN.

IN the years 1845 and 1846, he was seized with a prophetic yearning to visit various places associated with his most tender recollections. In spring 1845 he wended his way to the old home of Anster, examined it carefully, and brought away shells from the beach, and a bunch of lilac from his father's garden, all which he laid up amongst his relics. He dropt into a cottage to see where Lizzie Geen's water-bucket stood, from which he used to drink when a schoolboy. He sought out his old acquaintances amongst the people, and talked with sympathetic glee over their youthful feats and their youthful notions. 'James,' said he to an old man above eighty, 'you were the first man that ever gave me something like a correct notion of the form of

the earth. I knew that it was round, but I thought always that it was round like a shilling, till you told me that it was round like a marble.' 'Well, John,' said he to another, whose face, like his own, had suffered severely from smallpox in his childhood, 'you and I have had one advantage over folk with finer faces; theirs have been aye getting the waur, but ours have been aye getting the better o' the wear.' He took pleasure in this homely kind of joking about his face. An old woman, who had known him when a youth, took out her spectacles, and after surveying him closely—'Eh but, doctor,' she exclaimed, 'ye're lookin' weel.' 'Ay, Jenny,' he answered laughing, 'do you know I think I'm going to be a good-looking *old* man; ye ken, when young, I was very coarse-featured.' Curiously enough, about this very time, Professor Tholuck of Halle being in Edinburgh, they had a great deal of intercourse in a mutual friend's house, and on one of these occasions, Tholuck turned round to his friend with a look of admiration, saying in German (which Chalmers did not understand), 'I have never seen so beautiful an old man!' Chalmers,

thinking it was a remark in the conversation, asked eagerly, 'What is it, sir, that he says?'—a question that had, in some way, to be quietly evaded. I can bear testimony (having seen him often during his two last years) to this nameless loveliness—not beauty in the artistic sense, for of that he had little—but a loveliness as of heaven, like that of Raphael, 'the sociable spirit'—the last finished outward expression of a life of noble thought and beneficent action.

But there were also incidents in his youthful haunts that moved him to tears. One such his Biographer relates, unfolding a singular story and a singular trait in his character—the deep treasuring-up of an attachment of boyhood; fit theme for song, yet too fine and sacred to be invaded by even the delicate hand of the poet. The little tale is told so exquisitely in the biography, that to attempt any other words would be profanation.

'The most interesting visit of all was to Barnsmuir, a place a few miles from Anstruther, on the way to Crail. In his schoolboy days it had been occupied by Captain R——, whose eldest daughter rode in daily on a little pony to the school at Anstruther. Dr. Chalmers was

then a boy of from twelve to fourteen years of age; but he was not too young for an attachment of a singularly tenacious hold. Miss R—— was married (I believe while he was yet at college) to Mr. F——; and his opportunities of seeing her in after life were few; but that early impression never faded from his heart. At the time of this visit to Anstruther, in 1845, she had been dead for many years; but at Dr. Chalmers' particular request, her younger sister met him at Barnsmuir. Having made the most affectionate inquiries about Mrs. F——, and her family, he inquired particularly about her death, receiving with deep emotion the intelligence that she had died in the full Christian hope, and that some of his own letters to her sister had served to soothe and comfort her latest hours. "Mrs. W——," said he eagerly, "is there a portrait of your sister anywhere in this house?" She took him to a room and pointed to a profile which hung upon the wall. He planted himself before it; gazed on it with intense earnestness; took down the picture, took out his card, and, by two wafers, fixed it firmly on the back of the portrait, exactly opposite to the face. Having

replaced the likeness, he stood before it and burst into a flood of tears, accompanied by the warmest expressions of attachment. After leaving the house he sauntered in silence round the garden, buried in old recollections, heaving a sigh occasionally, and muttering to himself, "More than forty years ago!"' In gazing on the long-lost vision and ideal of his youth, he felt as Dante did with his Beatrice:

> 'And she, so distant as appeared, looked down
> And smiled, then towards the Eternal
> Fountain turned.'

In the spring of 1846, he visited, for the first time, Yarrow and St. Mary's Loch. He felt the charm of these sweet hills of mingled grass and heather. 'I like these quiet hills, these sober uplands. Hills, all bare like these, are what I call the statuary of landscape.' In the evening he called his daughters into his own room, and read over to them with great animation the trilogy of Wordsworth on *Yarrow*, repeating with peculiar rapture these lines:

> 'Meek lowliness is round thee spread,
> A softness still and holy;
> The grace of forest charms decayed,
> And pastoral melancholy.'

But his thoughts were running still farther south, even to the banks of the Teviot and the wooded slopes of Cavers, where he first entered upon his ministry at the beginning of the century, though then all unthinking of its solemnity and importance. The youngsters of the party one day climbed an Ettrick hill; no longer able for such an arduous task, he awaited them below. His eager question when they descended was, 'Did you see *Cavers?*' Later in the season he satisfied his wish by an excursion to Cavers, and to Hawick and Jedburgh, seeking out as usual every well-known scene and every long-remembered face. His last journey of 1846 was to his old field of victory, Glasgow, and down the Clyde, and round the shores of Loch Lomond. I do not know whether it was at this visit, but it is related, that when a gentleman took him to a point where there was a glorious view of Loch Lomond, Chalmers gazed for a long time as if transfixed, then turned round, his countenance beaming with emotion, 'Depend upon it, sir, there are lakes in heaven!'

XXIV.

HORÆ SABBATICÆ.

BUT in his later years more especially, he was not growing merely in simplicity and sweetness and joyfulness of nature; he was strenuously but humbly climbing up the heights, to attain the perfection of the Christian life. His pious walk and conversation were seen and known of all men,—his evident earnest desire to fulfil the two commandments—of love to God and love to man. But not until his death, when his private journals and meditations were discovered, and his Biographer, with a wise discretion, made them known, were even his most intimate friends aware how, amidst his multifarious engagements, he had kept up such a constant watch over his heart and life, and such a close communion with his God.

In that three years' transformation which he passed through, from 1809 to 1812, he described many stages of inward experience. Intensely practical as he always was, his instinct, on seeking to enter upon the Christian life, was to press for universal holiness, which is the true end of the Christian religion. In his first excitement he thought this was to be attained by conscientious, reflective, ever-careful obedience — by keeping a check upon his inmost thoughts, a bridle upon his lips—a lash, as it were, suspended over his head, to regulate his every step and movement. He thought that holiness was a growth of nature, nourished by the study of Scripture, and fanned in some way by the wings of the Divine Spirit. He set himself to the work, therefore, as a matter of business and human diligence; tried, through the day, to direct his steps aright, and at night, with his journal before him, sat as censor over his daily conduct. He condemned most of it, approved some of it, resolved to do better; but he was more and more weighed down by a sense of deficiency and of some inherent inability. In a year's time he was driven well-nigh to despair.

This cannot be the way of attaining holiness. He seems getting farther and farther away from the summit; the requirements of obedience are always mounting higher, his own performances sinking lower; the light shines purer and purer, and in this light his own hands look always the fouler. Besides, he is oppressed by a burden of infelt guiltiness. How is this to be removed? how is this to be blotted out from the sight of a just and righteous God? He searches the Scriptures more attentively; he consults the testimonies and experiences of those who have gone before him in the path of Christianity. He now discerns the evil of sin in a new light. It is not a natural infirmity merely, as he used to suppose; it is not to be laughed off with a proverb—*humanum est errare;* it is not a thing to be got rid of by ordinary care and resolution. It bulks before him as an impassable barrier; it shuts him out from the countenance of God; it has been the thing, all this time, that has stopped him in his course, and dragged him down in his efforts after holiness. He pauses, reconsiders his situation, looks all around him for means of egress and progress. Under the guidance of

Scripture, he is brought to the Saviour, who says unto him, '*I am the way.*' After doubts and fears and hesitations, he believes this word; he ventures his salvation upon this assurance; he enters through this way with implicit faith; and, lo, the barrier that impeded him now disappears, and the light of God's countenance shines down from the firmament. He has a new experience: not only is the barrier to his passage swept out of the way, but he feels as if he were raised on angelic wings, borne up by supernal powers—as if he were making a real and progressive approach to those heights of holiness formerly unattainable; not by a growth of nature, but altogether by a gift of divine grace. In other words, he now experiences that holiness is to be attained, not by the efforts of natural strength, but as part of a gracious gift from Christ the Saviour: first, pardon of guilt; next, progressive holiness of life. From the date of this blessed experience, he renews his former pursuit; he pushes on to the same goal as before, that is, to holiness, growing more and more up to perfection. But he now seeks it, not as the prize of natural virtue, but as a

faculty implanted and fostered solely by divine grace.

I am not composing a chapter for a theological treatise; I am only tracing, in a few feeble words, the warm, living experiences which Chalmers passed through, and of which he has left a record in his Journals, and especially in his *Horæ Sabbaticæ*, being his meditations and prayers in his reading of the Scriptures on Sundays, from 1841 to the eve of his death in 1847.

This, then, was the distinguishing characteristic of Chalmers, and made him a marked man in more senses than one,—this restless yearning anxiety about the attainment of holy living; this jealousy over his actions; this self-torture in finding himself, whilst still upon earth, so deficient of the perfections of heaven. Thus he meditates and prays:—'May I now regard myself as sanctified and set apart unto God as one of His peculiar people, who has come out from a world which lieth in wickedness. . . . The two must go together—the unwavering faith which rests on God's promise, and the purification by which, in person and character, we are made holy and fruitful in good works. Here follows

the efflorescence of that practical Christianity which emerges from its well-laid principle. . . . O Lord, may I well understand that Thine is a holy salvation. . . . Mark how faith is identified with obedience — elements which the controversies of the Church have arranged in hostile conflict, and placed so widely apart from each other.' It was this treating of faith as only instrumentary, and this panting after holiness as the true goal of the Christian, which made him suspected amongst some of the ultra-orthodox theologians, of whom he so frequently complains in his *Horæ Sabbaticæ;* who sit in polemic state, surrounded by their little scales and weights, and determine, to the nicety of a grain, who is sound in his creed, and who is not. These weighing-machine theologians never liked Chalmers; and it is plain, from the hints in the *Horæ Sabbaticæ*, and from what I have heard otherwise, that, in the very last years of his life, some of these pismires stung him, and even attempted to raise against him the cry of heresy. 'There is an alienation of affection,' he writes under the date of April 1846, 'that takes place when there arises the suspicion or imagination of an error,

and more particularly when it amounts to the conception of a heresy. I believe that at this moment I labour under a suspicion of this sort; and I feel a consequent distrust, and even dislike of me, as the effect of it. May God give me to walk aright under this visitation; to walk in the truth, even when accused for dereliction of, or hostility to the truth. . . . I have adversaries, and I pray for charity towards them. In as far as I am right and they are wrong, give them to see, and, if Thou thinkest meet, to acknowledge their error. I will not pray for their humiliation, but for their amendment. Bring forth my judgment unto light, and my righteousness as the noonday. Save me from the trials that are too heavy for me, and give me to overcome. Prepare me for the land of blessedness and everlasting peace, where enemies cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.'

As he reads the Scriptures, and lays bare his heart, and brings it up before the mirror of the divine word, he trembles at the spectacle of his secret iniquities, of his declensions from what is good, of his proneness to evil, of the selfishness and impurity that mingle in his best ser-

vices. He utters strong groans and cries; he throws himself on the mercy of God with the most affecting supplications. It is ever thus when the anxious soul turns upon itself the microscope of the divine law: every weak place is discerned, every spot and deformity is magnified; unknown seeds of disease are detected, and even that which to the outward eye seemed healthy and beautiful, takes a strange and unwholesome hue. Did not Paul, under this searching self-examination, cry out, 'I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' And did not Augustine also cry, 'Woe is me, Lord! have pity on me! woe is me! Lo, I hide not my wounds! Thou art the Physician, I the sick; Thou merciful, I miserable! . . . Verily Thou enjoinest me continency from the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the ambition of the world. . . . Art Thou not mighty, God Almighty, so as to heal all the diseases of my soul? . . . Thou wilt increase, Lord, Thy gifts more

and more in me, that my soul may follow me to Thee, disentangled from the bird-lime of concupiscence. . . . Affrighted with my sins, and the burthen of my misery, I had cast in my heart, and had purposed to flee to the wilderness; but Thou forbadest me, and strengthenedst me, saying, "Therefore Christ died for all, that they which live may now no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him that died for them."' Need we wonder, therefore, that Chalmers, so like-minded, so delicately sensitive to all sin, sank down in shame and self-abhorrence as he looked down into himself with the same fiery scrutiny? 'Save me, save me, O God, from the licentious, and—what I pre-eminently stand in need of—from the wrathful affections of this carnal and accursed nature. . . . Give me to ponder well those decisive sentences, that if I do the works of the flesh, I shall not inherit the kingdom of God; and that if I am Christ's, I have crucified the flesh, with its affections and lusts. . . . May I be enabled to renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh. Thou knowest my frame; Thou knowest my peculiar necessities; Thou knowest, more especially, my lack

of wisdom. I pray for guidance and support, that I may be enabled to conquer this great temptation. . . . Humble me, O God, under the sense of my former most disgraceful relapses. Keep me, O God, within the bond of Thy covenant. The sins and iniquities of my past life—and these, too, in the face of solemn and repeated sacramental engagements—do Thou remember no more.' He droops and languishes, too, in the void of a certain personal isolation. Although the centre of such a wide, and, in many instances, such an affectionate and devoted circle of friends, he pines for some higher form of fellowship than earth can afford. 'I am conversant more with principles than with persons. I begin to suspect that the intensity of my own pursuits has isolated me from living men; and that there is a want of that amalgamation about me, which cements the companionships and closer brotherhoods that obtain in society. . . . I would not live alway. What a wilderness the world is to the heart, with all it has to inspire happiness! I have a great and growing sense of desolation. What a marvellous solitude every man bears about with him!' Sometimes he falls into

the most heartrending agonies of felt inward weakness and remorse. 'Lord Jesus Christ! Thou art as willing as Thou art able; Thou wilt, as well as canst, make me clean. Oh, compassionate me, and heal the foul diseases of this tainted spirit, and give me to be holy even as Thyself art holy! . . . Thou knowest, O God, what a weak—nay, what a wicked—nay, what a detestable creature I am! I call out "Unclean, unclean!" Heal my backslidings; deliver me from the power of my inborn and yet obstinate corruptions; let me be temperate in all things; let not sin have the dominion over me. I pray to be rescued both from present disgrace and from future damnation, for I am exceeding vile, O God, and cry for Thy mercy on me, a miserable offender. . . . O God, be with me! O Christ, help me!' These were the agonies of his spirit, as he felt the remaining touches of moral defilement within him; his agonies and weepings and longings to be stripped of all that is evil, and clothed upon with the good and the pure. His conscience was now so tender, that the least evil thought wounded him. His

soul was now so bathing in the pure water of life, that the least spot of human corruption looked huge and monstrous and unclean. The nearer he approached the goal, the more fearful was he of making any slip or stumble. But he often becomes more tranquil, especially as he draws near to the close of his life, as if unconsciously he were becoming meet for his departure; and his heart will go forth in kindling aspirations after that moral perfection, that consummated holiness, which had been the aim of his whole regenerated existence—the human to be at last drawn up to the divine. 'Oh for the experience of such an outpouring of God's Spirit upon my heart, as that henceforth I shall call Him Abba, Father! Let me wait and watch for this. Let me resolutely aim at this . . . till the day dawn, and the day-star arise within me. . . . Guide me, O Lord, in all my researches after the good and the true. . . . Make me perfect, O God. Turn me to Thyself. . . . Come quickly, Lord Jesus! . . . In the attitude of habitual service and of habitual application, would I wait for Thy coming to our world.'

XXV.

THE LAST TROPHY.

HE now (that is, about the year 1845) turned from the administration and finance of the Free Church to the object of his lifelong devotion—the completion of another model of his idea of *Territorial* superintendence—the building of another City of God. His former experiments were made whilst the Established Church was still entire; whilst he still had, at least in outward show, the countenance of the Government and the landocracy. But now the Church was disrupted, the Government over his head was brass, and the landocracy, who monopolized the soil, were iron; every official and aristocratic impediment was piled up against him. He had no instrument to work with but only

the Free Church, and concert with the Seceding denominations; and he never concealed,—he avowed as distinctly now, when he was under the ban of the State, as when he was at the head of an Establishment,—that he only trusted to Voluntaryism as a supplement, liberal but intermittent, and apt to be dried up; and that State endowment, even partial, was necessary as a base from which to extend universally, in the large cities and in the remote districts, the full machinery either of religion or education. He was anxious to test the resources of his new position; to see whether organization, and a good understanding amongst the evangelical denominations might not, to a large extent, be a substitute for State endowment; whether they might not agree to chalk out certain territories of ministration; and thus spread out and out, until the whole country was but one city of the mighty King.

He chose as the scene of his operations a well-defined district—that long narrow street, the West Port of Edinburgh, with its adjoining wynds or alleys, at the bottom of which was anciently situated the western gate into the

city by the Grassmarket. There a most heterogeneous, a most abject, depraved, and miserable population were huddled together. The Tophet of Edinburgh! the scene, but a few years before, of the *Burke and Hare murders*, with all their diabolical orgies and atrocities! This West Port district lay in his way, as he walked from his residence in Morningside to the Free Church College, then in George Street; and no doubt in these walks the Moral Engineer had been marking out this neglected suburb, as he previously did the Water of Leith, for the site whereon he was to plant an encampment, in his never-ceasing war against pauperism and ignorance and vice, and all personal and social misery. His mind was fairly directed to it in the beginning of 1844, when he writes to a correspondent:—'I have determined to assume a poor district of 2000 people, and superintend it myself, though it be a work greatly too much for my declining strength and means. . . . The most which I can personally undertake to do, is to work off one model or normal specimen of the process by which a single locality might be reclaimed from this vast and desolate wilder-

ness; and after the confirmation of my views by a made-out experience of this sort, pressing it on the imitation of all other philanthropists of all other localities.'

If in the lowest deep of city heathenism there may still be a lower deep, the West Port had sunk to the bottom of that abyss. Amongst the many deplorable evidences given by the excellent and self-denying missionary, now minister, Mr. Tasker, we may take two, merely as specimens of the seemingly hopeless brutality of the people. 'Upon one occasion he entered a tenement with from twelve to twenty apartments, where every human being, man and woman, were so drunk they could not hear their own squalid infants crying in vain to them for food. He purchased some bread for the children; and entering a few minutes afterwards a neighbouring dram-shop, he found a half-drunk mother driving a bargain for more whisky with the very bread which her famishing children should have been eating. He went once to a funeral, and found the assembled company all so drunk around the corpse, that he had to go and beg some sober

neighbours to come and carry the coffin to the grave.'

But Chalmers had now gathered round him, as he always and easily did, a firm band of agents, both male and female. The West Port was divided into twenty proportions (*proportions*—his old Glasgow word!) each containing, as nearly as might be, twenty families, and 100 individuals. Over each of these proportions a visitor was appointed, to form acquaintance and hold intercourse with the inhabitants, and attract them to respond to the object. The agents had regular weekly meetings, where they compared their experiences, and discussed and resolved upon their plans. Chalmers punctually attended these meetings, except when he was unwell; and this, alas! was frequently happening in this autumn and winter of 1844–5. At first they met in Portsburgh Hall, an old court-house of the district; but their headquarters were soon transferred to a singular apartment. In the low and filthy lane where the Burke murders were perpetrated, and nearly opposite their den, was an old deserted tannery, with an

upper loft reached by an outside stair, very rough and creaky. The interior was bare and dilapidated; the walls coarse and unplastered, pierced here and there with little, dingy, unsightly windows; the roof low and scantily slated, scarcely affording decent shelter; the floor decayed, uneven, and shaking at every tread.

A school was opened on the 11th of November 1844, under a most efficient teacher, Mr. Sinclair. Chalmers, with his usual buoyancy, and his tenacious adherence to the territorial idea, wrote to him in October:—'I should particularly like that your preference should be for West Port boys, rather than for those who might be afterwards brought in from beyond the locality. Be assured that you will meet with a full average of talent among the ragged children of this outlandish population. Our great object, in fact, is to reclaim them from their present outlandishness, and raise them to a higher platform.' The school opened with sixty-four day and fifty-seven evening scholars; and in a single year no fewer than 250 were in attendance, chiefly

from the West Port. In December, public worship was commenced in the same tan-loft, —at first with about a dozen poor old women; but the attendance gradually and steadily increased. It was in the same tan-loft where Chalmers, now in the winter of 1844–5, used to meet with the agents. 'It is yet but the day of small things with us,' he says in his *Horæ Sabbaticæ;* 'and I, in all likelihood, shall be taken off ere that much greater progress is made in the advancement of the blessed gospel throughout our land. But give me the foretaste and the confident foresight of this great Christian and moral triumph ere I die. Let me at least, if it be Thy blessed will, see—though it should be only in one or in a small number of specimens—a people living in some district of aliens, as the West Port, reclaimed at least into willing and obedient hearers—afterwards, in Thine own good time, to become the doers, of Thy word. Give me, O Lord, a token for the larger accomplishment of this good ere I die. Go forth conquering and to conquer; so that the strongholds of the present wide-spread corruption

might all be overthrown. Oh that we had possession even of one of these strongholds! —a presage of the final overthrow of the prince of darkness, who now rules and holds the ascendant over so wide a territory, and throughout such a length and breadth of our country's population. . . . . And, O Lord! in my present helplessness and imbecility, teach me how to direct and encourage others; and cause many to arise who might do both wisely and valiantly in the battles of the faith.'

It was not easy for a stranger, however respectable and sincere in his sympathies, to obtain access into the 'charmed circle' of these reunions of the agents, or to the public services. With the agents the meetings were private, and for business; they had often delicate personal questions of the neighbourhood to discuss, and naturally disliked to be hampered by the presence of strangers. Chalmers, again, had always—in Glasgow and elsewhere—been extremely jealous of the incursion of persons outside his territory, either into agency meetings, or even more into the schools and place of worship. 'The West Port for the West

Porters!' was his motto. By a little connivance I was present at one of the meetings, and frequently mingled in the Sabbath services. I had a friend at court in one of the agents, who used to pass me through the custom-house.

It was a dark, raw, dripping night of that same winter, I threaded my way to the mouth of Burke's Close, down the black Avernus, up the creaking stair into the tan-loft, where there were a few rugged benches, and a small rickety table, with one or two candles upon it; but the atmosphere was dull and dim. Ten or a dozen agents were grouped around the table, some of them labouring men and artisans, some of them small tradesmen of the place, all staid, thoughtful, serious-looking men. The chair of state was vacant—a plain deal chair, without arms or ornaments of any kind. It was a little before the time of meeting; they were talking in a low earnest tone, but evidently waiting for the word of command. By and by, just at the stroke of the hour, we heard a husky but hearty voice outside—a sharp short military tramp on the stair—'Take care, Doctor! there's the step, Doctor!' Some within hastened and opened the

door, and abruptly, but kindly, in marched the old man,—the Moral Engineer,—with a wave of the hand to all, and a radiant smile on his countenance. After interchanging salutations, down he sat in the chair of consultation.

I cannot now recall the particulars of the conference; it was all simple, ordinary business of the little territory; but I remember in outline the charming scene. He was so bland, so animated, so cordial with all; sought so humbly and eagerly to hear every one's opinion; threw the whole force of his intellect into every little point of the discussion, as if it were the settling of a campaign, or the saving of an empire; yet he was so open, so candid with the suggestions of others, so heart and soul their brother. 'Yes, John, that will be better'—'No doubt, Andrew, yours is the right course'—'Well, Robin, I don't quite see the thing in your light.' And then, on the other hand, how these plain men penetrated the grandeur of his mind, the depth of his thoughts, the fruitfulness of his experience! how their eyes sparkled in gladness and reverence as they looked and listened! Yet they were not overawed by his magnitude—nay, were

drawn by his light and sweetness. On all sides are heard, 'But d'ye no think, Doctor?'—'Are you aware, Doctor?'—and the old man listened with a child's docility, and pondered and weighed everything which the humblest of them suggested. Without any dictation, he kept them to order, to method, to despatch of business, to getting through the work; and once or twice he kindled into those spontaneous flashes of conversation, which one always admired more than even his most magnificent written apostrophes. In this little scene—the only one where I ever saw him actually at work—I felt what a mighty radiator of influence he was! how he swept every one along in his orbit!

I was several times present at the Sabbath services, which he now habitually attended, sometimes as a preacher, often as a hearer. Here, again, one was always affected by his personal magnetism. When he was a hearer only, one would see him near the pulpit, in a crowd of deaf old women, who were meanly clothed, but who followed the services with unflagging attention and interest. His eye was upon every one of them, to anticipate their

wishes and difficulties. He would help one old woman to find out the text; he would take hold of the Psalm-book of another, hand to hand, and join her in the song of praise. Any one looking at him could see that he was in a state of supreme enjoyment; he could not be happier out of heaven. And then, when he preached, he gave the 'genuine West Porters,' as he called them, the very best of his productions; he preached to them as Bossuet did, at the close of his life, amongst the poor people of his village; he chose simple evangelical themes; but often the eloquence was as lofty as if he had been addressing the most select audiences in Edinburgh or London. Though in his sixty-fifth year, his powers as an orator were little enfeebled; his frame was still unbroken, his arm still wielded the thunderbolt; and that living sense of reality, which heated all his eloquence, still blazed around him with unabated flame.

In the true territorial spirit,—desiring in preference the attendance of the parishioners,—he looked with some jealousy on well-dressed strangers coming and occupying the seats of his 'genuine West Porters.' I always dressed in

my shabbiest, to avoid detection. But one day he announced there was to be a collection next Sabbath, in aid of their funds. 'You know,' he said, 'in general I am not favourable to strangers coming here, and engrossing the seats which rightfully belong to the inhabitants of the territory; but as next Sabbath is a collection, I invite all the well-dressed people to come, provided they will give donations corresponding to the fineness of their dress.'

The mission grew under a regular ministry. In February 1847 a neat church, fronting the main street, was opened. On April 25th the first sacrament was administered to the members, at which Chalmers presided and preached; and on the Monday he said to Mr. Tasker, 'I have got now the desire of my heart: the church is finished, the schools are flourishing, our ecclesiastical machinery is about complete, and all in good working order. God has indeed heard my prayer; and I could now lay down my head in peace, and die.'

And, thirty-five days thence, he laid down his head in peace, and died!

XXVI.

HE DIES AT HIS POST.

HE left Scotland for London on the 6th of May 1847, — ten days after the West Port sacrament, — to give evidence before a Parliamentary committee, as to the refusal of so many of the landowners to allow sites on their estates for the erection of Free churches. Self-blinded men! forcing into public discussion that most delicate and combustible of questions, What are the inherent, indefeasible obligations to the commonwealth on which all landed property is held?—a discussion which only two classes would precipitate: the high patrician, from the stupidity of power: the low revolutionist, from the desire of a scramble. Sensible men of all classes would postpone it as long as possible. The hint of

coming legislation brought the most obtuse of the site-refusers to their senses: existing cases were mostly compounded; and I believe few bad cases now occur.

Chalmers remained in London over a week.

In his cross-examination by Sir James Graham, he was pressed, much against his will, into sketching out a platform on which the Free Churchmen might be justified in re-entering the Establishment. He held the subject to be too remote for any serious consideration; yet suggested, if the Legislature would guarantee the spiritual independence of the Church,—amongst other rights, that of withholding ordination from an unsuitable presentee, the temporalities to be conditional on ordination, that is, in fact, the abolition of patronage,—the Free Church might feel at liberty again to accept establishment, and would deal leniently with the residuary clergy, who had fomented the late confusions, and caused the Disruption. This was ridiculed at the time as one of his usual reveries. About two years ago, Mr. Gladstone made in substance the same answer to a deputation of the Established Church, agitating for the abolition of

patronage :—' I think it would be said by those who went out through the struggle twenty-six years ago, that the ecclesiastical property should be made over to those who bore earlier testimony to the same principle, namely, the Free Church in 1843, and the various Seceding bodies now forming the United Presbyterian Church.' The suggestions are in principle identical. But that which was utopianism in Chalmers, is practical statesmanship in Gladstone. Such are the judgments of the world!

Although, from the events of the Disruption, he was less courted than he used to be in London by mere political notables and English dignitaries, who ran under his shield in 1838 from the spears of the Voluntaries; yet he received most honourable attention from men of the first distinction, as Lord John Russell (who was then Premier) and Lord Morpeth; and he showed an unusual delight—I know it was very much remarked at the time—in holding intercourse with scientific and literary men. Amongst others are mentioned, Dr. Whewell, Dr. Buckland, Isaac Taylor, Morell, Carlyle. The interview with Carlyle was peculiarly memorable. ' I

had lost all recollection of him,' writes Chalmers, 'though he told me of three interviews, and having breakfasted with me at Glasgow. A strong-featured man, and of strong sense. We were most cordial and coalescing, and he very complimentary and pleasant; but his talk was not at all Carlylish; much rather the plain and manly conversation of good ordinary common sense, with a deal of hearty laughing on both sides.' On one topic Chalmers spoke with deep concern,—it seems at this time to have been weighing heavily on his mind,—the estrangement existing between the Churches and the body of literary and scientific men. He mourned over this as a calamity to both, and a dead-weight on the harmonious progress of the world. Was there no common ground possible on which they might again meet, and harmonize and co-operate? He was also full of his 'City of God' in the West Port; of the charm and fruitfulness there is in *localism;* that even a large and dense and utterly heathenish town may soon, by means of localism, be broken into clusters as of little country villages, opened out to the breath of all spiritual and

civilising influences. He was bright and hopeful and bounding as a boy. Carlyle remarked to a visitor soon afterwards, 'What a wonderful old man Chalmers is! or, rather, he has all the buoyancy of youth. When so many of us are wringing our hands in helpless despair over the vileness and wretchedness of the large towns, there goes the old man, shovel in hand, down into the dirtiest puddles of the West Port of Edinburgh, cleans them out, and fills the sewers with living waters. It's a beautiful sight!'

During this visit, Lord John Russell, as we have mentioned, was Premier, and Mr. Fox Maule, now Earl of Dalhousie, was a member of the Government. Mr. Maule took the opportunity to confer with Chalmers anxiously as to the possible basis for some scheme of comprehensive National Education, which was felt then, as now, to be a matter of critical necessity; but on which, then, as now, it seemed hopeless to bring the leading men and leading sections of the community to terms of agreement. Discussion has been useful—has nearly exhausted information and suggestion; but the time for action has arrived, if our common population

are to be brought up to the fair average of European intelligence, and saved from a deeper and deeper descent into brutality and barbarism. The initiative must now be taken by a strong, brave, virtuous Government, deciding on the broadest public grounds, cutting the Gordian knot, taking the whole responsibility, trusting to the good sense of the general community, and setting at defiance all sectional oppositions. This is a case where the voice of Britain, tired of all tinkering, demands a dictator to provide that no detriment happen to the commonwealth. Chalmers, one of the earliest and most active and ardent friends of universal popular education,—his whole political economy hinges upon education,—had for many years been revolving the question in his mind, especially when all those contentions were raging which form what is called the *religious difficulty*. Twenty years before (about 1828), he had taken a prominent part as to the Irish system; and he then insisted, as I understand him, that the Bible at least should be a daily class-book in the national schools; but that none of the children should be compelled to attend, or be excluded

from the other classes, if their parents objected to their being present at the reading of the Bible, that is, of the Protestant version. The difficulties as to the introduction of any religous book or catechism into national schools, when the nation is so much divided on religion, swelled and swelled every year, till they appeared almost insurmountable; and amid the din of sects, the educationists pure and simple were almost reduced to despair of ever seeing any national system at all. Chalmers had to undergo a struggle the most agonizing, between his own personal feeling of religion, his own ineffable love for the Bible, and his patriotic desire to see a more extended and a more deep-flowing education amongst the whole masses of the people. It is no exaggeration to call his struggle *agonizing*, for I am assured that, about this very time (1847), he was a prey to the most cruel doubts and perplexities, and would burst forth into exclamations of distress: 'Is it not a terrible thing to have the Bible kicked in this way out of the schools?' But after gathering all information, and weighing every aspect of the question, he came to the conclusion, generally, that

the element of religion, most precious as it is, must not stand in the way of common national education; that rather than this, it were better to leave religion to its natural guardians under God—parents, friends, ministers, and apply the national funds solely to the secular branches. The Government could only provide for the ordinary education. The Christian sects themselves were to blame, who, in their thousand hopeless splits, could not agree upon any common basis of Christianity,—not the Government, which must legislate for the whole community, and could not subserve or truckle to particular sects and parties. This I infer to have been his final conclusion. It is thus that I read his last solemn testimony addressed to Fox Maule about a week before his death.

'It were the best state of things, that we had a Parliament sufficiently theological to discriminate between the right and the wrong in religion, and to encourage or endow accordingly.

'But failing this, it seems to us the next best thing, that in any public measure for helping on the education of the people, *Government*

were to abstain from introducing the element of religion at all into their part of the scheme, . . . leaving this matter entire to the parties who had to do with the erection and management of the schools which they had been called upon to assist. A grant by the State upon this footing might be regarded as being appropriately and exclusively the expression of their value for a *good secular education.*

'The confinement for the time being of any Government measure for schools to this object we hold to be an imputation, not so much on the present state of our Legislature, as on the present state of the Christian world, now broken up into sects and parties innumerable, and seemingly incapable of any effort for so healing these wretched divisions as to present the rulers of our country with aught like such a clear and unequivocal majority in favour of what is good and true, as might at once determine them to fix upon and espouse it. . . .

'As there seems no reason why, because of these unresolved differences, a public measure for the health of all, for the recreation of all, for the economic advancement of all, should

be held in abeyance; *there seems as little reason why, because of these differences, a public measure for raising the general intelligence of all should be held in abeyance.*'

These were his last words to his countrymen, a week before his death, on the subject of National Education.

From London he paid a visit to Oxford with Dr. Buckland, where he roams delighted through the halls and colleges, and attends the Doctor's lecture on geology. But chief, he makes for his sister Jane's, in Gloucestershire, —his housekeeper in the early Kilmany days, and his cherished correspondent through life. Makes various side excursions—to see Robert Hall's widow, John Foster's daughters. A week of delicious and sanctified repose: sweet memories of the past, outpourings of the heart in the present, blessed assurances for the future, blending together as the soft colours of the rainbow. 'May one and all of us,' he would pray, when they were gathered together round the family altar,—'May one and all of us be shielded under the canopy of the Redeemer's righteousness; that every hour that

strikes, every day that dawns, every night that darkens around us, may find us meeter for death, and for the eternity that follows.'

On Friday, 28th, he returns to Edinburgh, 'bearing,' says his Biographer, 'no peculiar marks of fatigue or exhaustion.' Saturday—works at a report for Monday's General Assembly. On Sabbath—repairs to his stated church; converses much and cheerfully and piously with the friends around him; sometimes walks alone in the garden, where one of the family overhears him breathing out his spirit: 'O Father, my heavenly Father!' Peace, lovingness, calm cloudless intellect, the quiet composed appearance of a hale old age, the infelt enjoyment of all high truths, with no intervening doubt, no distracting controversy, a full final realized sense of the *Divine*, —such were the characteristics of these few days.

After prayers on the Sabbath he retired to his room, waving his hand cordially with his usual adieu—'a general good-night!'

Early on Monday morning a message came for some papers; but as he had not been heard

moving, the old servant would not disturb him. A second message. 'She then entered the room,' says his Biographer, whose sublime description cannot be touched even to a word,—'She then entered the room: it was in darkness. She spoke, but there was no response. At last she threw open the window-shutters, and drew aside the curtains of the bed. He sat there half erect, his head reclining gently on the pillow, the expression of his countenance that of fixed and majestic repose. She took his hand; touched his brow. He had been dead for hours. Very shortly after that parting salute to his family, he had entered the eternal world. It must have been wholly without pain or conflict. The expression of the face undisturbed by a single trace of suffering; the position of the body, so easy that the least struggle would have disturbed it; the very posture of arms and hands and fingers, known to his family as that into which they fell naturally in the moment of entire repose,—conspired to show that, saved all strife with the last enemy, his spirit had passed to its place of blessedness and glory in the heavens.'

Could there be a finer illustration of the lesson of the Psalmist: 'Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is *peace?*' Could a death more peaceful close a human life that was more upright and perfect? At the death of any man of remarkable genius, how often have we to express grief and disappointment! Either we have to say—'Alas! he has died before his time—before he had come to the maturity of his powers.' Or—'He has never been appreciated; his heart has been chilled by penury, or misunderstanding, or neglect. Like Bacon, he may leave his name and memory to posterity.' Or—'He has left a mangled reputation: indolence stopped the current of his soul, and unruly passions stamped his forehead with the brand of shame.' How altogether different with Chalmers! Like Paul, he had finished his course; and death came, not as a spoiler, but as the husbandman who bears home the sheaves nodding with ripeness. His powers had long settled into rich-laden maturity: longer time might only have shaken out some of the grains. The world always appreciated and loved him; he was one of her favourite

children. His character and reputation had no taint; he had an activity that brought forth the whole power that was in him; and his only passions were of the generous sort—that exalt, and do not detract from a man's fame. His whole nature was ennobled by the nobleness of the work in which he was constantly engaged. In short, he had great powers, and greatly used them; great opportunities, and was always equal to them. His life was not longer than his usefulness. There was no feeble falling-off. He died in harness—at his post.

XXVII.

IN MEMORIAM.

CARRY him forth, then, ye people of Scotland! carry forth your spiritual king, and give him a burial befitting his nobleness and a people's grief. Like other kings, even the best, he has had his seasons of partial eclipse, when, amidst the still general loyalty, there would be mutterings of discontent, signs of revolt; but these interruptions have been slight and passing; for thirty years and more he has reigned with beneficent sway over the hearts and souls of the people. All have been moved by the might of his words; all have been affected by the purity and grandeur of his aims—the constancy and ever-youthful ardour with which he has laboured for their fulfilment. The serenity and sun-like

warmth and influence of his later years have banished any former clouds from the sky; and that sudden solemn death—that passage of a moment, without sickness, without pain, without struggle, in the silence of night, in the deep sleep of peace, into that rest which remaineth for the good and faithful servants of their Lord—hath thrown around the whole memory of him a radiance as from heaven. Carry him forth to burial, loyally and lovingly.

It was the 4th of June, in the prime of summer; but Nature disrobed herself of her gaiety and refulgence. The day was gloomy, shading the landscape in a sombre-grey; heavy shapeless volumes of mist rolled over the heights, and sank down, impenetrable and cheerless, upon the horizon; whilst a keen east wind whistled drearily along the streets, and over the neighbouring fields and meadows. Those who know Edinburgh will remember the undulating ground immediately to the south, rising to a long flat ridge, formerly part of the old Borough Moor or common, which, three hundred years ago, as described by Drummond of Hawthornden, was a 'field, spacious and

delightful by the shade of many stately and aged oaks.' These spacious and delightful glades are all now opened, cut up, and built upon, though many stately and aged trees have been left. The old common passes under various names—Morningside and Merchiston on the west, Bruntsfield in the middle, and Grange to the east. Some years before his death, Chalmers had built for himself a commodious but modest mansion at the west or Morningside end of this ridge; and now he was to be buried in the Grange Cemetery, a mile to the east, which had lately been formed out of some pleasant pasture-fields, encircled by little belts of wood.

The Free Assembly, which was convened at the time, suspended its sittings for business, and spent the morning in the exercises of devotion. So, in various churches of the town, did the ministers, not members of the Assembly, the deputations from England, and Ireland, and foreign countries, and the students and probationers of the Free Church,—all of these meetings joined by large numbers of the inhabitants. Before one o'clock a dense body of the principal

citizens gathered on the south side of Charlotte Square, at the west end of the town; and the Magistrates, arrayed in their scarlet robes and full insignia of office, to render every meed of human honour, waited in St. George's Church in the same square. At one o'clock, the Assembly came forth from their hall in George Street, all in gowns and bands, preceded by their officers with white rods in their hands; they were followed by the professors of the Free College, the ministers and elders not members of the Assembly, the ministers of other denominations, the students and probationers, with certain officers interspersed, bearing black rods; next came the rector and masters of the High School in their gowns, preceded by their janitor, and the rector and students of the Normal School, with a number of other teachers of the neighbourhood. A pause of a few minutes was made in the wide Lothian Road, the way to Morningside, when the Magistrates came up and took their place in front, and the mighty array of citizens closed up the rear. The pavement on both sides was a moving mass of population, men and women and children.

Doorways and windows, and all accessible standing-places, were filled with spectators. The procession, four abreast, now moved up Lothian Road, and at the head of it, made a bend towards the West Port, where Chalmers had raised up his last City of God. At the Main Point, as it is called, the entrance into the West Port, stood clustered the committee and congregation of the West Port, representing that outcast population, which had been the objects of his latest labours and prayers, symbolizing that which had been the ideal of his life—the social and spiritual redemption of the neglected *millions*. In sorrow and orphanhood they fell in at the rear of the procession; which again wended its way by the Links of Bruntsfield, over the summit at Morningside, then halted near the house of a nation's mourning. The hearse was now brought forth, with the four horses and attendant grooms, amid general manifestations of the most profound emotion. Two interesting groups here joined the procession—the office-bearers and congregation of the Morningside Church, of which he had himself been a member, and the pupils from Merchiston

Castle, the seat anciently of the famous John Napier, inventor of the logarithms, but which has been for some generations one of the most celebrated academies in Scotland. The procession, completed by the last sad memorial, began its funeral march. 'All the neighbouring roads,' says an account, which must either have been drawn up or revised by the eloquent pen of Hugh Miller,—'all the neighbouring roads, with the various streets through which the procession passed, from Morningside on to Lauriston, and from Lauriston to the burying-ground, a distance, by this circuitous route, of considerably more than two miles, were lined thick with people. We are confident we rather under-estimate than exaggerate their numbers when we state, that the spectators of the funeral must have rather exceeded than fallen short of a hundred thousand persons. As the procession approached, the shops on both sides, with scarce any exceptions, were shut up, and business suspended. There was no part of the street or road through which it passed sufficiently open, or nearly so, to give a view of the whole. The spectator merely saw file after file pass by in

what seemed endless succession.' Many thousands had already repaired to the extensive Cemetery. Through the middle of it, for the whole width, runs a series of vaults, faced with Gothic screens, and surmounted by a pathway or terrace, raised about twenty feet above the level: *there* chiefly had the crowd stationed themselves, composed in large proportion of women, who evinced the deepest interest and sympathy. And now, by the eastern gate enter the hearse and the dark-plumed horses; then wave after wave, and reach after reach, of that far-stretching procession. Hundreds pour in, and hundreds follow, but the rolling tide seems endless. 'The appearance,' says the eye-witness, 'was that of an *army*.' At last the vast space is filled—black with the badges of mourning, relieved, however, by the scarlet robes of the magistracy near the grave, and the varied colours worn by many of the women on the elevated terrace. The day continued as it began—sombre-grey, obscure, and bleak. From that plateau-ground of the Grange, whence so many charming views may be obtained on a clear day, almost none of the surrounding

scenes were visible. The beetling Castle rock, the crown-shaped spire of St. Giles, the 'lion's head' of Arthur's Seat, only peeped out now and then through the rack of the clouds; the leafy woods around were thickly draped in mist; the rough hills of Braid, the bold summits of the Pentlands, were obliterated in the dense gloom; the east wind was moaning through the flowers and the trees. All the immense multitude had now settled, and was still and pensive. Eye and ear, all the senses and feelings, deprived of outward prospect, were concentered upon the *one* spot. All could yet see before them that ever-memorable form—could hear again that piercing and irresistible voice. The very youths of Merchiston could still see him, as he used to pass every day near their gate—the great head, the eye all reverie, the look so abstracted yet so bland—the wondrous staff in his hand, brought down at regular intervals on the ground, by which, amid all his thoughts and conversations, he could always mentally number the paces he had walked. Every one there had his reminiscences, his tender associations, his thousand chords of love

and admiration. But the coffin is drawn forth from the hearse; it is lowered into the grave; it is steadied, settled at the bottom. The awful pause of last separation—the feeling that the bourne is now passed whence no traveller returns or replies—then the dread silence harshly disturbed — the dropping of the clay — the rattle of the first stone upon the lid. . . . Ah! . . . No service, no ceremony, no gently whispering words of comfort or hope break, in Scotland, the concentration of the sorrow—no relief, no relief, save in tears. 'It was the dust,'—in the concluding words of Hugh Miller,—'it was the dust of a Presbyterian minister which the coffin contained; and yet they were burying him amid the tears of a nation, and with more than kingly honours. . . . Never before did we witness such a funeral; nay, never before, in at least the memory of man, did *Scotland* witness such a funeral.'

Surely we have been contemplating a very remarkable and a very noble life, ending with

a death universally mourned. We have only seen this life in passing glimpses, not as it may be seen in his extended Biography; and even his Biography, full and diversified as it is, falls immeasurably short of the actual impression which he made on his own generation of living men. There is a grand *something* always lost even in the best biographies, as in the casts that are taken after death: the warm current of life has stopped, the soul has waned away from the countenance. The life even the best told, is not the life as it was lived. We have only therefore been looking, not at the real Chalmers, but at a pale reflection from a larger portrait, carefully executed, yet far short of the living and moving original. Still, with only this faint image before us, do we not feel that we have been in the presence of a Master-Mind? one of those who not only fill well the part which has been assigned to them in the drama of life, but who leave the impression that they were capable of far greater things—that they had been limited in their sphere, not in their powers of action?

We always reverence a man the more ear-

nestly, and place him higher on the pedestal of fame, the more that his life has been dedicated to the welfare of his fellow-men, and the less he has been absorbed in mere bustle and anxiety for his own aggrandisement, his own pre-eminence or pleasure. Chalmers lived and laboured almost entirely for his species, not for himself; and not in a vain, hazy, cosmopolitan way for mankind in general, but for the men, women, and children that lay close around him—for his parishioners, his townsfolk, his countrymen, and then, in ever-widening circles, as far as in his power, for the whole world, wherever ignorance and vice and misery were to be found. Nothing human was alien from him; but it was to the humanity that lay nearest to him that he first performed his duties.

He did almost nothing for his own personal interest. He made use of his high and extensive social connection to promote the public causes which he had at heart; but he never seems to have made an ounce of personal capital all his life out of all the grand folks whom he knew, and who would have been proud to do him a service. He was too busy, too pre-occupied in

his own sphere of duty, to have much time or inclination for general society; and it is one of the curious traits in his character, that, under great outward frankness and cordiality, he had much reserve, much reticence, much solitariness in his nature. We have already quoted some strange sayings of his as to his sense of loneliness in the world. 'I am conversant more with principles than with persons. I begin to suspect that the intensity of my own pursuits has isolated me from living men. . . . I have a great and growing sense of desolation.' One who was in the most intimate relations with him for many long years, once observed to me: 'He was a most secretive man, Chalmers, and kept his mind rigidly to himself. You might live with him for years, and not know his real sentiments as to the men of the day and passing events, even those in which he was concerned and engaged. When he had a duty to speak out, he spoke out, as every one knows, without any uncertain sound, and quite fearless of persons; but otherwise he was very close, and staved off conversation with general answers. I do not know that latterly he had a friend in

the highest sense,—one to whom he would freely and unrestrainedly unbosom himself.' This is quite in keeping with his laments over his desolation; and explains also the avidity with which he flew to the relief of solitary meditation, and held such unrestrained, such all-confessing, all-supplicating communion with his God. He had entered thoroughly into the situation and feeling so pathetically expressed in the Psalm: 'As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God! My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? . . . Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God; for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.'

I believe—indeed he over and over again confesses, and in his later years, as was his wont, he laments—that he had a keen desire for fame as an author; that he had an ambition to take his place on the roll of British literature; and that he felt a real gratification in the popularity which many of his writings attained, and in the universal reputation in which he was held as a

man of genius and eloquence. But if we are to judge from his own private diaries and letters now made public, he did not hang with any peculiar fondness of pleasure over his literary successes. He often notices the publication of a work, but without one spark of self-laudation, without the least anxiety about its reception ; and he seldom recurs to it afterwards, or evinces in any other way the touchiness of the *irritabile genus*. I think, also, the thirst for applause as an author died very much out of him. As his heart became more and more set upon the realization of his great ideals, he cared less for the charms of literature, and used his pen less to gain renown than to gain attention to the particular schemes of beneficence in which he was engaged. He was less anxious whether his books were admired : more anxious to ascertain whether they were working conviction and bringing subscriptions. They became rather his manifestoes as a man of action, than his well-matured productions as a man of literature.

Any one who has gone over the whole of his writings, as I have done, from first to last, though many of them at a period now distant, must

have felt what an immense extent of subjects he had grappled with in his time, and how careful and conscientious had been his study. He was an accomplished mathematician, up even to the higher branches; he was an astronomer, not upon testimony, but from having verified the calculations for himself; he was an experimental chemist; a botanist, not from the books of men, but from the book of nature; and there were few other sciences with which he had not something of a real and technical acquaintance. Of literature and history he had made no exact or comprehensive study; but he had thoroughly realized to himself the British and French philosophy, metaphysical and ethical, from Locke, through Hume, Reid, Butler and Paley, Voltaire, Rousseau, the Encyclopedists, down to his contemporary Thomas Brown. He was perfect master of the everlasting 'Yes and No,' so far as it had been tossed backward and forward during that period; but beyond these dates and limits he had never effectively penetrated. Of all departments of science, however, the modern creation of Political Economy had been his principal and engrossing study, — not as an

amusement, not as a dilettanteism, not even as a manly exercise of the mind, but as a business of his life, as a solemn part of his duty, as an oracle from which he would best learn how to advise, how to befriend, how to lay and conduct his plans for the good of the poor and the working class. His discussions on all this wide range of subjects may be too diffuse; he may waste too much time over preliminaries and side-points; his tone may be too eager, his view too one-sided; but he is never shallow, never trite; he always hits at last upon that which is the decisive point, shows that he understands it, and fights round it with untiring industry, amazing force, and a never-exhausted richness of illustration. Still, while according a full tribute to his knowledge, talent, solidity, and variety of attainments, I admit he is no philosophical discoverer, no originator of a school, or even of a new doctrine; his merit always comes round to that which was so happily expressed by Stuart Mill—his habit of studying all phenomena and all subjects '*at first hand*.' He has this precious originality, that every thought which he utters has been tested and

made his own, though the germ of it may have been planted and nourished by his forerunners.

His powers of speculative thought may not have been high enough to place him in the ranks of the leaders in philosophy, but they were large enough, and fresh and deep enough, to communicate a superior wisdom, efficacy, and stability to his measures as a man of action. His habits of philosophical thought—of generalizing upon the nature and motives and affections of man, and upon the effects of various social arrangements—aided him greatly in devising and shaping his plans, and in working them out in a way that should harmonize with the whole machine of society, and be permanent and self-continuing; not transitory, and depending upon chances and caprices. His constant aim was, to take advantage of some obvious human principle, place it under good working conditions, give to it the first mighty shove, then trust to its becoming habitual, necessary, almost mechanical, as if under a law of nature. The nation in which he wrought might be small; the scene of his operations might be somewhat hidden from the European eye; but a fair and

genial examination of his acts will convince every spirit, that has the slightest touch of a nobleness like his own, that in simplicity and boldness of conception, in fertility of resources, in elevation of character, in prudence of management, in skill and unyielding firmness of execution, he is entitled to his place amongst that high order of men, who have been the *founders* of society, who have given the initiative to legislation, to government, to institutions, to great social movements. He was of the stuff of which the Pyms and the Colberts were made, the Franklins and Cavours, the Knoxes, the Wesleys, the St. Vincent de Pauls,—the men who have the gift to meet emergencies with the proper remedies; to bridle revolution by the restraining influences of a new order; to make of benevolence a work, not a sentiment; to consolidate and perpetuate the forces of enthusiasm in the moulds of powerful organization. These chiefs of society differ from each other in the importance of their deeds, the largeness of their sphere, the dignity of their position, even as one star differeth from another star in glory; but we mark not with critical eye the differing

lustre of their crowns—which are brighter, which are dimmer. We look up to them with simple reverence, as *one* shining band in the temple of Fame,—the movers of the world,—who, in the time of darkness, have shed upon it a guiding light; in the time of stagnation have stirred up its waters into healthful play; in the time of confusion and destruction have tamed its violence with great conquering ideas, and created new forms of life to accommodate the new wants and aspirations of mankind.

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